

Palmtop

The journal for Symbian-powered computers and communicators

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(Volume 7, issue 1)

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EDITORIAL

It seems hard to believe that almost a full year has passed since Psion's decision to cease development of handheld computers.

The current status of existing devices is that Revo production ceased a month or two ago, and Series 5mx availability is becoming erratic, suggesting that we'll probably see the very last 5mx's roll off the production line well before the end of this year.

There's more positive news on the netBook front though, with rumours of a couple of big corporate orders recently that should help to ensure not only continued production, but hopefully continued development as well. Let's hope we'll be seeing a 'netBook II' sometime in the future, to claim at least a small share of the enormous laptop and sub-notebook computer market.

Although the stream of new software for Psion handhelds is inevitably starting to dry up, most of the larger EPOC software houses are now busy working on new versions of their products to run on the Nokia 9210 Communicator.

With such a vast proportion of Palm OS, Pocket PC and desktop applications being created by US-based organisations, it's novel to see an almost entirely European-based programming effort for the 9210. Given Psion's historical strength in Europe and the failure of its meagre

marketing efforts in North America (undoubtedly a large factor in its demise), there were always only a handful of US developers, but in the 9210 world I have yet to come across a non-European player.

With the widespread success of the Nokia 9210 in Europe so far and the still-delayed release of the US version, the 9290, it's hardly surprising that American developers have yet to emerge, but it's still a rarity in the world of computing, with the current leaders residing almost exclusively in Poland, Hungary, Germany, France, Russia, the Netherlands, Scandinavia and the UK.

It'll be exciting to see what happens when the new breed of Symbian-powered smartphones starts to reach the US market. Considering the potential size of the user base in that part of the world and the marketing power of Nokia, Ericsson and other Symbian partners, who knows, we could be in for a much-needed Symbian explosion.

Steve Clack

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Thanks... to all the other contributors whose names appear within Palmtop and those who have kindly supplied products for evaluation.

EPOC cartoons - Carl Reader
Printed by Nuffield Press

NEWSREEL

What's new in the world of EPOC and Symbian

News of the Nokia 9210i

Nokia has announced the 9210i, to be released late summer, which mainly improves on the 9210 by pre-installing a number of key third party applications. The Opera web browser means that technologies such as Javascript and CSS are possible for the first time on the Nokia. In addition, Flash Player enables web-based animations and games, and RealOne Player means video and audio can be streamed on HSCSD networks.

You can also now lock the memory card and there's better support for picture messaging.

Also improved (slightly) is overall memory. The 9210i Communicator now has a total memory count of 40MB, of which 16MB is Application Memory (i.e. flash ROM), 16MB is User Memory (which has 6MB of applications pre-installed) and 8MB of SD RAM 'Execution Memory'. It's a pity that the 8MB execution memory wasn't increased, as this is a limitation when using several third-party applications.

www.nokia.com/phones/9210i



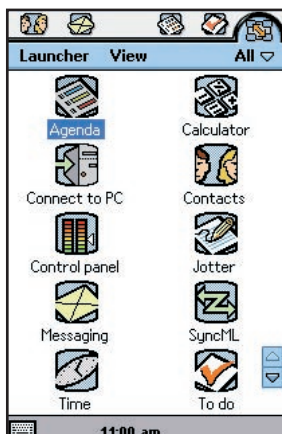
First look at the P800

Sony Ericsson has revealed the new state-of-the-art in Symbian-powered products—their P800 smartphone. Think of the underlying power of EPOC, the robustness of Ericsson's mobile telephony, a colour improvement on the popular Palm OS PIM interface and the innovative telephone keypad flip first seen in the Ericsson R380. Add in a digital camera and stylish case and you have the P800, which should happily trounce the Nokia 7650 in the features stakes, although it's likely to be in a slightly higher price bracket.

The P800 uses Symbian's new OS v7.0 UIQ interface, which is a narrower (208 by 320 pixels) version of the old Quartz reference design (see issue 29). The look and feel of the applications parallels those of the current leading Palm OS and Pocket PC stylus-driven handhelds, though this isn't a criticism—rather a sign that handheld interfaces are maturing into systems that actually work as users expect them to. We've been trying out UIQ and you can see some example screenshots below.



In addition to standard Email and SMS text messaging facilities, Sony Ericsson includes the AU Systems browser, which can handle HTML, cHTML, i-Mode and WAP pages. The P800 is a triband device, so it will also work on US networks. In Europe it can connect via GPRS, or GSM where GPRS is not available.





The built-in camera (on the back of the unit) allows capture of pictures in VGA resolution using 4096 colours. 12MB of memory in the P800 allows for storage of up to 200 such pictures.

The Sony Ericsson P800 will be available during the autumn, with modified versions, the P802 and the P800c, designed for the Chinese market.

www.sonyericsson.com

Series 7 patch

Psion Teklogix has released a patch for any Series 7 with build versions 750 to 754. One of the main bugs fixed is that of the touch screen failing to work about 10 minutes after total battery replacement. You can find a full description of bugs fixed and links to the latest build at the URL below.

www.newth.net/psion/problems.html

Psion repair changes

Psion's repair service has changed once again, with new premises and new procedures. To return a Psion palmtop for repair, you should obtain an RMA number and further details from www.servicelogistics.com/psion/custrma/index.english.html or by telephoning 0870 2403095.

There is now a fixed price for repairs: Series 7 and netBook - £115, Series 5 and 5mx - £90, Revo and Revo Plus - £75, and Series 3a, 3c and 3mx - £85. Psion no longer repairs Series 3 or Siena products (though POS do - call them on 0208 6779246).

www.psion.com

www.posltd.com

David Levin CEO

Symbian has announced David Levin as CEO following the resignation of Colly Myers in February. Levin had previously been Chief Executive of Psion since February 1999.

www.symbian.com

GSM/GPRS TSY

Atelier, having repositioned itself as the 'leading expert in telephony software for Symbian OS', has announced a portfolio of Symbian OS GSM/GPRS Telephony Modules (TSY), greatly shortening the process of integrating telephony software with the Symbian OS and phone hardware. Previously, handset manufacturers had to program TSY from scratch for each new platform.

www.atelier.tm

Symbian DevExpo report

Symbian Developers Expo, 23rd-24th April 2002, Excel, Docklands, London

Symbian CEO, David Levin, kicked things off with the announcement that Siemens has joined Symbian as a new shareholder with a five percent stake. He said it was going to be a prosperous year for Symbian, with the release of four new smartphones: the Sony Ericsson P800, the Nokia 7650, plus two other units yet to be announced.

Symbian is now made up of shareholders from Sony Ericsson, Siemens, Panasonic, Motorola, Psion and Nokia, which should be enough to give Microsoft's new Pocket (Phone edition) PCs a decent battle for the hearts and minds of consumers. Multi-Media Messaging (MMS), giving the facility for users to send and receive pictures, music and video clips, is eventually expected to become as popular as SMS text messaging.

The mobile synchronization standard 'SyncML' is fast becoming the standard amongst industry leaders. SyncML gives PDA/smartphone users the ability to synchronize with corporate email servers.

Symbian's Martin Tasker announced that SDKs (Software Development Kits) are now available for Symbian OS version 6.1 for Nokia's 7650 and for Symbian OS version 7.0 for Sony Ericsson's P800. The 7650 interface is known as Series 60, developed by Nokia, based on the old 'Pearl' reference design and designed for one-handed (phone-like) operation. The P800 uses Symbian's UIQ, designed to be used with a stylus (or fingernail).

Nokia Executive Vice President Anssi Vanjoki kicked off day two, with a PowerPoint presentation controlled with his Nokia 9210 via infrared. Nokia believes that innovation is driven by consumers and that products should be designed for the mass market.

Overall, the Symbian Developers Expo was enlightening and encouraging, focussing attention back onto a very strong Symbian OS that will almost certainly be widespread in the world of mobile computing and communicating over the coming years.

Ozzie Hall-Osman

Search Go

Technology home

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Standards

Glossary

Symbian OS v7.0 in detail

Symbian OS v6.x in detail

Symbian OS attracts applications

Press releases

Community news

Symbian OS technology



Symbian OS v7.0 for 3G mobile phones

Symbian OS v7.0 supports robust multi-tasking, integrated telephony, communications protocols, data management, advanced graphics support, a UI framework and a variety of application engines in 3G mobile phones.

Symbian's Magpie Technology

Delivering the right information at the right time is key to the success of advanced data services on mobile phones. Symbian's Magpie Technology is an advanced data services framework designed to deliver embedded content, providing intuitive access to contextual services.

Why a different operating system?

Symbian believes that the mobile phone market has five key characteristics at its core that make it unique, and require a specifically designed operating system. This white paper describes these key characteristics and explains why Symbian OS is the best-in-class solution for mobile operating systems.



What's new...

[UIQ product description and style guide](#)

Creating Symbian OS phones

A primer for engineers...

Symbian's Magpie Technology

Advanced data services on mobile phones...

User interfaces UIQ user interface

is a customizable pen-based graphical user interface for media-rich Symbian OS phones...

Symbian OS 7.0 in detail

According to Symbian, OS 7.0 is the "advanced, open operating system... designed for the specific requirements of advanced 2G, 2.5G and 3G mobile phones. Symbian OS includes a robust multi-tasking kernel, integrated telephony support, communications protocols, data management, advanced graphics support, a low-level graphical user interface framework and a variety of application engines."

Anybody wishing to delve deeper into exactly what it can and can't do, should note that full specifications are available in HTML and PDF form at the URL below.

www.symbian.com/technology/technology.html

OPL now official for the 9210

Symbian has finally released the OPL SDK for the Nokia 9210 Communicator (i.e. for Symbian OS 6.0, or ER6).

The developers package (3.2MB) is available at www.symbian.com/developer/downloads/v6oplsdk.html. The latest OPL runtime package (260K) is available at www.symbian.com/developer/downloads/v6oplrun.html.

GPRS on a Psion palmtop

If you try to use ER5 Psion palmtops with a GPRS mobile phone, you'll probably find the Psion reports that 'no connection can be established'. The URL below describes the setting up of a working GPRS connection, with the aid of a small freeware utility.

www.ki-ag.de/html/quickfix.html



DreamConnect

DreamSpring has launched DreamConnect for the Psion 5mx and Revo, claimed to be a better contact manager than Contacts. It uses the standard EPOC Contacts database and an extension of the same interface. We'll feature a full review in the next issue of Palmtop.

www.dreamspring.com

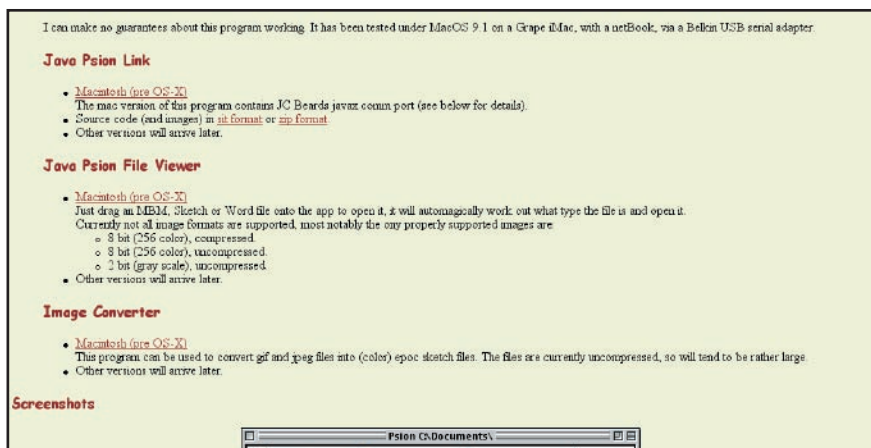
Java link to desktops

Java Psion Link is a new, cross-platform solution for transferring files between

Psion palmtops and any computer with a serial port and the ability to run Java. As the program uses the existing Psion Link Protocol, it does not require installing additional software on the palmtop.

Also available from the same source is Java Psion File Viewer, which will convert MBM, Sketch or Word files, and Image Converter, which can be used to convert GIF and JPEG files into (colour) EPOC Sketch files. Further development of all three tools is planned.

website.lineone.net/~john.montgomery



Visual Basic for the 9210

AppForge, the mobile development tools specialist, has announced that it will work with Nokia to provide Visual Basic support for the 9200 range. AppForge's Software Development Kit already supports Palm OS and Pocket PC devices. The 9200 series will then support Visual Basic, Java, C++ and OPL development, opening the platform to a huge community of programmers around the world.

www.appforge.com

Revo backlight for the brave

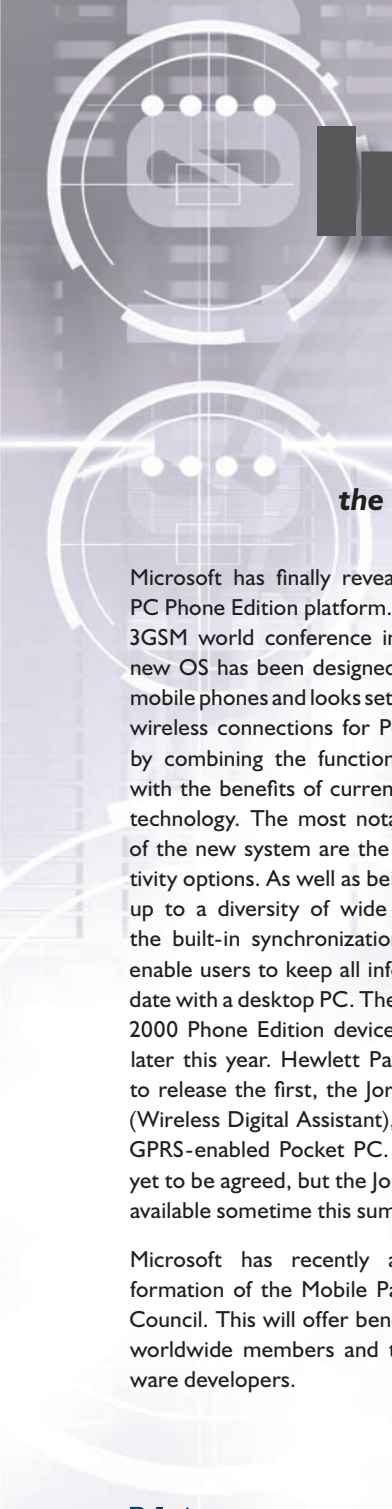
Posted on an Internet User Group board are detailed instructions on adding a backlight to the Psion Revo range. Not for the faint-hearted!

www.kpsiug.net/plus/board.php



Carl Reader, creator of Psimon and Psion as featured in Palmtop, is now available for freelance work. If you're looking for artwork such as splashscreens, game backdrops and icons for your Psion applications, email carl.reader@lineone.net for more details, or go to website.lineone.net/~carl.reader





Industry NEWS

***A brief update on what's happening in
the non-EPOC sector of mobile computing...***

Microsoft has finally revealed the Pocket PC Phone Edition platform. Unveiled at the 3GSM world conference in February, the new OS has been designed specifically for mobile phones and looks set to revolutionise wireless connections for Pocket PC users by combining the functionality of a PDA with the benefits of current mobile phone technology. The most notable advantages of the new system are the 'smart' connectivity options. As well as being able to hook up to a diversity of wide area networks, the built-in synchronization software will enable users to keep all information up-to-date with a desktop PC. The first Pocket PC 2000 Phone Edition devices are expected later this year. Hewlett Packard looks set to release the first, the Jornada 928 WDA (Wireless Digital Assistant), a colour GSM/GPRS-enabled Pocket PC. UK pricing has yet to be agreed, but the Jornada should be available sometime this summer.

Microsoft has recently announced the formation of the Mobile Partner Advisory Council. This will offer benefits to its 5000 worldwide members and third party software developers.

Pocket PC production continues, with new devices having been announced by Toshiba and NEC. Fujitsu has launched the fastest Pocket PC to date—the Pocket L00X will run on a 300MHz processor and boasts features such as integrated Bluetooth, USB and add-on GPRS.

Palm has previewed its new 32-bit OS 5. The platform has been designed to run on Intel's ARM processors rather than Motorola's Dragonball. This shift can only be good news for Palm users, as the new processor is significantly faster. Other changes include improved security and enhanced wireless support—the current lack of which has been cited as a reason for the poor response to Palm devices in the corporate market. Palm's acquisition of Be will also be reflected in enhanced multimedia features. Palm OS 5 is the first major change since Palm's software company split from the hardware manufacturer earlier this year. PalmSource, the software arm, remains committed to ease of use, long battery life and low cost—factors which have served to keep sales of Palm devices high.

Andy Nott

Software Shorts

Steve Litchfield and Steve Clack take a look at the latest additions to the world of EPOC software...

Disagreement within a team can sometimes be a strength. Having observed both the strong points and weaknesses of the Nokia 9210 Communicator, I remain personally convinced that the basic hardware and software design is still immature and I will be sticking to EPOC Release 5 (Series 5mx/Revo, etc.) for the time being. Others on the Palmtop team are rather more enamoured of the 9210 (see page 37, for example), so you'll find a good range of opinion, vision and prediction within the magazine as a whole.

Opinion in the wider palmtop world seems just as split, with some Psion owners buying up bargain 'spare' Psions just in case,

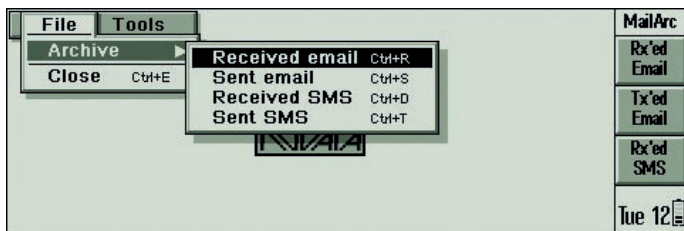
some happily embracing the Nokia, with others switching to Palm OS or Pocket PC handhelds. And with a significant core of users sticking to the older OS, there's still a worthwhile amount of new ER5 software to talk about. Plus, of course, the latest batch of new ER6 conversions for the Nokia 9210, which Steve Clack will guide you through in the section starting on page 15.

Reaching the Summit

KuDaTa's **PsiTrex** is a shareware utility to interface with the Garmin eTrex range of GPS (Global Positioning System) receivers. It has been designed with the eTrex Summit model in mind, but should work with the eMap and others in the eTrex range. PsiTrex allows waypoints, tracklogs and routes to

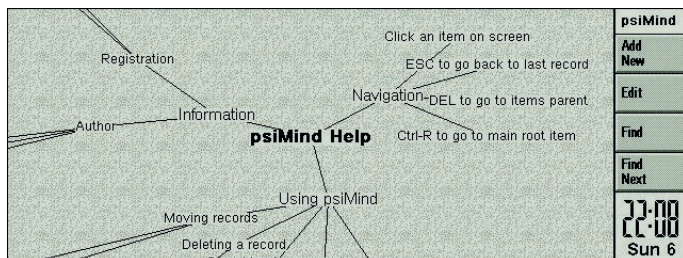


PsiTrex
*about to
communicate
with a Garmin
eTrex GPS*



The MailArc utility's minimalist interface

PsiMind's own help system is presented as a mind map!



be downloaded to the Psion and stored as plain text files. These can be archived or edited, and uploaded back to the eTrex.

PsiTrex also includes a monitor for standard NMEA-0183 sentences, allowing remote monitoring of position, satellite data and error estimates.

www.kudata.freemove.co.uk

Archive those messages

Also shareware by KuDaTa is **MailArc**, a message archiver for the ERS Email application. Received and sent emails and SMS messages can be stored in plain text files, for archiving or for subsequent import into Data or another application.

www.kudata.freemove.co.uk

Expanding your mind

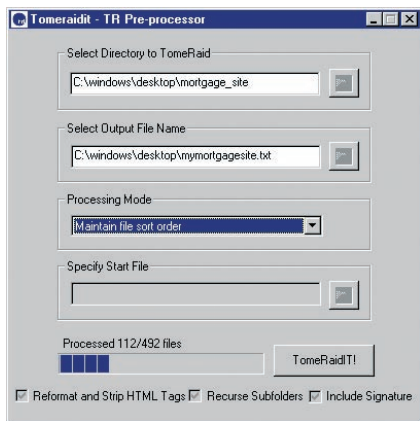
After what seemed like forever in alpha testing, Kevin Golding has finally released

PsiMind, his little freeware mind-mapping utility. The interface isn't perhaps as attractive as you'd expect from a big commercial offering but the basics of mind-mapping are all present and correct, and PsiMind is quick in real-world use. Nodes can be created, edited and deleted at will and you can even attach files and text notes as you go. There are good export and printing facilities, should you later want your mind map in outline format.

www.cix.co.uk/~kgolding

HTML raiding

From Get Connected Web Designs comes the shareware **Tomeraidit**, an HTML pre-processor for the popular TomeRaider document system. TomeRaider allows the viewing of heavily compressed database and ebook content. Tomeraidit is designed to import existing off-line web sites into marked-up text files suitable for direct



A Tomeraidit conversion in progress

import into TomeRaider for Windows and thence onto the Psion palmtop.

www.tomeraitdit.com

www.tomeraider.com

Legacy Doom

Remarkably, the all-time classic first person shoot-em-up Doom has been ported to the Series 7/netBook by Peter van Seville. The freeware **EDoom** accepts genuine Doom WAD (map and level) files and runs in full colour, although there's no sound support

as yet. The project is Open Source, so a keen programmer reading this might want to take EDoom to new heights. Note that the web page quoted also contains links to the other Doom component files needed.

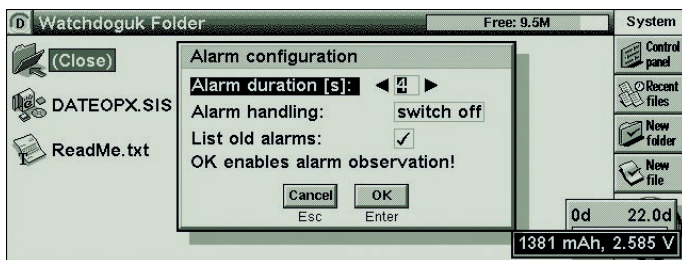
www.yipton.demon.co.uk/content.html

Watchdog

Nominally for Series 5/5mx only, Michael Franzen's freeware **Watchdog** aims to be a helping hand for anyone wanting to make more of their battery life, especially when using rechargeables. It runs once a minute to monitor the power consumption and state of the alarm server. The power consumption observed is used to estimate the remaining on-time and standby time as well as the remaining battery charge. In addition, the measured values are used to calculate the average battery capacity—the accuracy of the capacity estimation should grow with the number of sets of batteries used.

Observation of the Series 5 alarm server leads to an automatic cancellation of ringing alarms after a configurable time duration, again saving the batteries.

home.eplus-online.de/Franzen



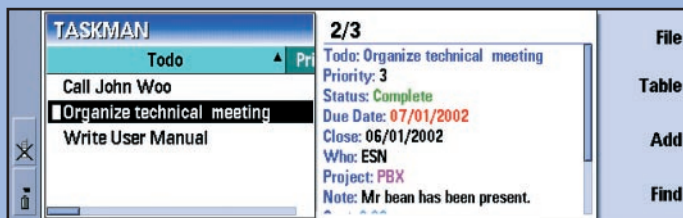
Watchdog helps to make the most of your Series 5's battery life

Nokia 9210 software (ER6)

Yet more SmallBase enhancements . . .

In what is (astonishingly) the 18th upgrade in the product's six month lifespan, Eric Sebban's **SmallBase** has now jumped to version 4, with the main enhancement being the move to file-based operation, just like Word, Sheet, etc. making it possible to launch files directly from Desk or File Manager. Other improvements include a new picture field type and the ability to copy, cut and paste between databases. We'll be starting a full tutorial series for SmallBase (both ER5 and ER6 versions) in the next issue—provided the software hasn't leapt to version 5 by that time!

www.pocketiq.com or corisoft.free.fr



*SmallBase—
getting more
powerful every
month...*

. . . and a Power-up for Power Data

First announced in the last issue of Palmtop, Epocware's **Power Data** database management system (DBMS) has recently been updated to version 3, with improved filtering and reporting. See page 33 for a full review.

www.epocware.com



*Power Data
gets further
enhancements*

More power to your email

If the Nokia 9210's built-in Messaging application isn't powerful enough for you then Cibenix's **Active Mail** should fit the bill. At first glance it looks almost identical, but adds a whole raft of new features, such as a scheduler to download messages automatically at a set time or when certain criteria are met, synchronization of multiple IMAP folders, the ability to process email notifications and more, with additional functionality in the pipeline. We'll be featuring a full review in the next issue of Palmtop.

www.cibenix.com

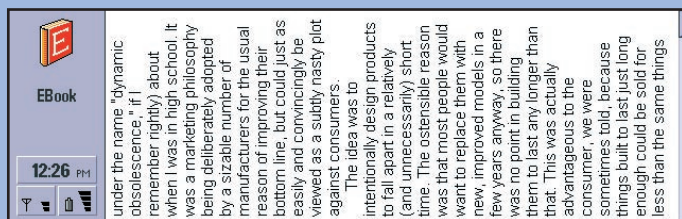


Active Mail promises an immensely impressive range of features

Another ebook reader . . .

A second Nokia 9210 ebook reader is now available, from Simon Quinn. **EBook** offers fewer features than Epocware's Ebook Reader in most areas, but does allow text to be viewed vertically rather than horizontally if desired. There's full support for auto-scrolling, book-marking and an option to strip HTML encoding from documents.

www.geocities.com/ebooknokia

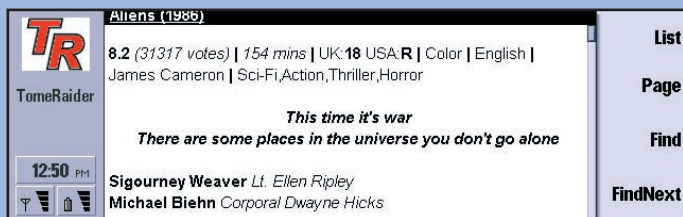


Read your ebooks sideways!

. . . and TomeRaider too!

You can now read all those dictionaries, encyclopaedias, the Internet Movie Guide and other reference texts with Proporta's long awaited Nokia 9210 version of the ever-popular **TomeRaider**. It's just like the Psion version, with the usual support for bookmarking and the ability to search the body text of entire documents.

www.proporta.com

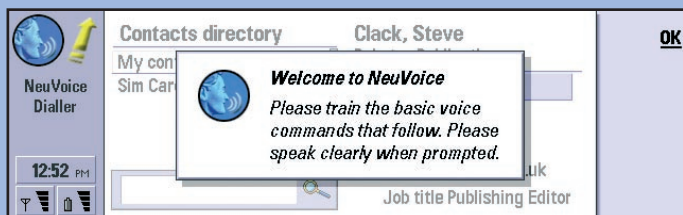


At long last,
TomeRaider
comes to
the 9210

Speak to me!

Tired of typing in the names of your contacts to look them up? **NeuVoice Dialler** from NeuVoice claims to be able to recognise voice commands to find and dial contacts and open applications with just a spoken word from the user—hands free! We'll be putting Dialler through its paces in the next issue.

www.neuvoice.com

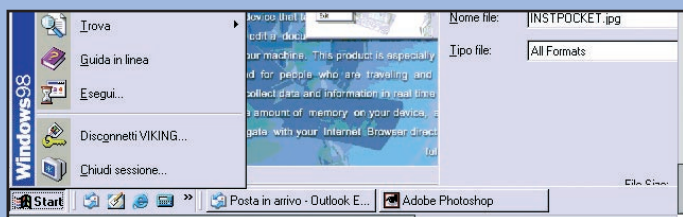


Train your
9210 to
respond
to voice
commands,
with NeuVoice
Dialler

PC control from your 9210

Bitween's **Remote Control** is a client/server application that lets the 9210 control and have full access to a PC over a wireless TCP/IP connection. It runs on all versions of Windows. A built-in compression engine maximises the refresh speed to ensure that the software works well at GSM speeds. Remote Control is also available in a Psion compatible version.

www.bitween.com



Remote
access to your
Windows PC
from a Nokia
9210 or Psion
palmtop

Track your car expenses

As RMR Software continues to port its extensive software portfolio to the 9210, **RMRCar** lets you track both business and private use of a company car, automatically generating all the necessary expense reports to submit to both your employer and the tax man. The software can be configured for either metric or imperial units.

www.rmrsft.com



RMRCar



11:49



Escort						F934HKK
Date	Start	Finish	Usage	Litres	Journey	
10 Jul 01	23456	23479	Business		New York	
12 Jul 01	23479	23484	Private		Shopping	
15 Jul 01	23484	23501	Business	45.50 \$	New Jerse	
18 Jul 01	23501	23527	Private		School Ru	
Business Miles : 40 (56%) Business Fuel : 5.35 10 Jul 01 - 18 Jul 01						

Add entry

Update

Default

Close

Keep track of private and business usage of your company car with RMRCar

Take note!

RMR Software's **RMRNotes** is a general purpose Notepad and Jotter program that lets you group related notes together. Entries can also be date stamped, prioritised, allocated to categories, sorted and filtered.

www.rmrsft.com



RMRNotes

2:25 PM



Notes24

Date	Prt	Description	Category
1 03 Aug 01	2	» Short Description One	Cat One
2 04 Aug 01	2	» RMRC	
3 05 Aug 01	1	» Release details for RMRNotes	Cat Two
4 05 Aug 01	2	» Garden Status	

Note List : NotesSorted by : Date (Asc)

Add

Update

View

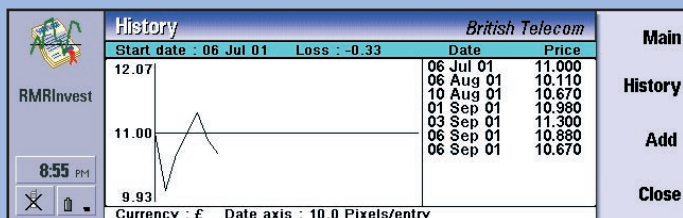
Close

Get some structure into your jottings using RMRNotes

Portfolio tracker

If you've got a share portfolio of stocks and bonds that you need to keep track of, then RMR Software's **RMRIinvest** is the tool for the job. You'll be able to see the total value of the portfolio, together with a graphical display of performance to date.

www.rmrsft.com

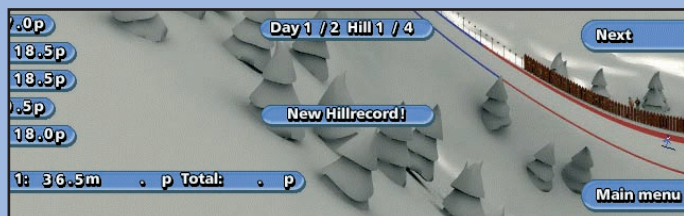


Keep tabs on your share portfolio with RMRIInvest

On-screen olympics

Probably the most visually appealing EPOC-based game to date, RedLynx's **Ski Flying** has your (tiny) skier performing enormous jumps at four different locations, all with beautifully rendered, full colour backgrounds. The gameplay itself is less impressive than the graphics, but fun nonetheless, and the ultimate demonstration of the 9210's display quality.

www.lynxlabs.com

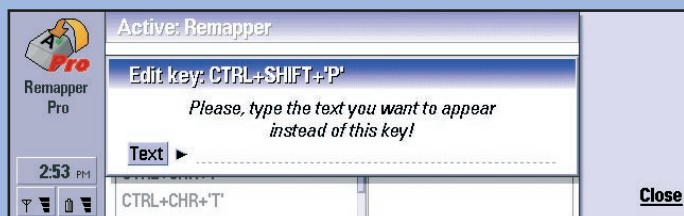


Ski Flying boasts delightful scrolling graphics

Macro power

A far cry from the power of Macro5 on a Psion palmtop, MIT Systems' Remapper Pro is still a must-have productivity tool for the 9210. Designed primarily to change the default keyboard layout to allow quicker entry of accented characters, it can also be used to assign shortcuts to launch applications and documents, or to auto-type commonly used words and phrases of up to 64 characters each. Multiple layouts can be defined and saved, making it possible to set up as many alternative keystrokes as desired. A non-'Pro' version of the program is also available, without the ability to assign shortcuts to applications or documents.

www.mitsystems.hu



Remapper Pro adds useful keyboard remapping and shortcut features



A Closer Look

...at some of the newest and most interesting products

Star Ratings:

- ★★★★★ Excellent
- ★★★★☆ Good
- ★★★☆☆ Average
- ★★☆☆☆ Fair
- ★☆☆☆☆ Poor
- ☆☆☆☆☆ Dismal

Interpreting reviews

Quality: the *Quality* star rating reflects how well the product works, whether it includes all the features you'd expect, whether the interface is consistent and easy to use, and in data-based software products it also reflects the quality of the information contained in the program.

Value: the *Value* star rating reflects the value for money of the product, taken within the context of what the program (or other product) does. Therefore a simple utility program will be rated differently to a sophisticated application at the same price.

Does it work on my palmtop?

Software reviewed should work with the Psion Revo and Revo Plus/Diamond Mako, Series 5/5mx, Series 7/netBook, netpad and Ericsson MC218 unless otherwise specified, though some programs may not currently support colour or utilise the full screen size of the Series 7 and netBook/netpad. These programs *may* run on the Oregon Scientific Osaris, though part of the display may be clipped due to the Osaris' smaller 320x200 pixel screen. Osaris users should always consult the program developer before purchasing.

Software designed for the Nokia 9210 communicator will not work on any of the above models. Likewise, software for any of the above models will not work on the Nokia 9210.

Ericsson R380e

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Active Desk

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Power Data

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TimeTool

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Ericsson R380e

The public silence from Ericsson in the 18 months since the release of the original R380 had, I admit, led me to fear the worst. Perhaps the project was too much of a side-line to the rest of its range and had been left somewhat still-born? As reported in Newsreel in issue 36, it turns out that Ericsson does see a future in this EPOC 'smartphone' after all, with a new version, the R380e.

For anyone who missed our detailed review of the original R380s in issue 31, the 380 is roughly the same size and shape as other Ericsson phones of the same generation, weighing under 160g/6oz including the battery. This is pretty impressive considering its remit as a 'smartphone', with all you need to keep in touch with your business and with the world. The standard phone keypad hinges down, you turn the unit sideways (left or right—the screen flip direction is configurable) and you have a 360x120 pixel palmtop screen, replete

with almost-recognisable EPOC icons and functions. Under the hood it runs EPOC Release 5, just as in the Psion 5mx, but the interface to the outside world is heavily customised and somewhat slimmed down.

From the point of view of a Psion owner, fearful of hinge and ribbon cable problems, one of the more interesting parts of the R380 design is that there are almost no moving parts whatsoever, and certainly none that are electrically connected in any way. The keypad hinge is a simple mechanical design and the phone keys are merely sprung pins that transmit key presses into touch-screen taps beneath the flip cover. Even the power-on key press ('No', held down for a couple of seconds) is purely mechanical, with the R380 retaining enough awareness, even when off, to sense the pressure on this specific part of its touch-screen and to respond accordingly. With no flexing wires or ribbon cables to fail, the R380 marque *should* be very durable.





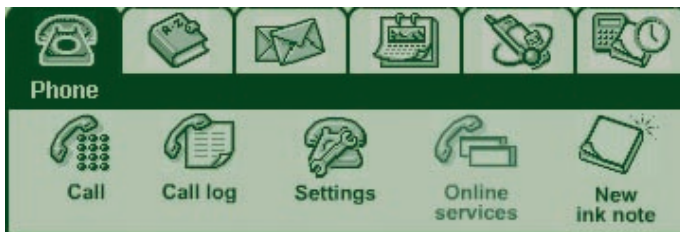
A basic, but still useful, voice recorder is activated on both R380s and R380e by pressing the button opposite the stub aerial, placed for ready access by a right-hander's thumb. Unfortunately, playback is only through the phone earpiece rather than through a dedicated speaker.

The biggest shock for Psion (or Nokia 9210) owners is the lack of a keyboard, of course. This naturally affects the way the unit is used and there's always an element of "Can I be bothered to input all this text now or shall I just put in a reminder and do the job later on the desktop?" The R380 uses two input mechanisms, which can be switched as required. A very good on-screen keyboard allows up to around 20 words per minute and the 'Jot' handwriting recognition (separate letters, not joined-up script) up to 15 w.p.m. These are respectable enough for short bursts of text but don't compare well to speeds of 40 w.p.m. and more on a Psion Series 5mx.

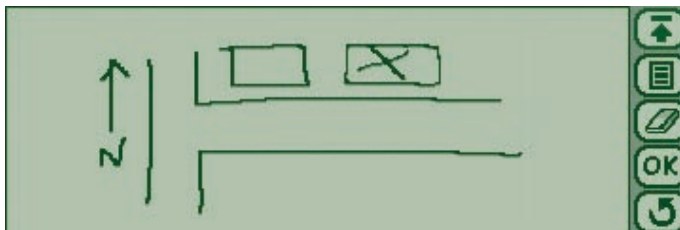
Leaving aside purely cosmetic changes (to a 'denim blue' fascia with silver buttons, and to redesigned on-screen icons with better use of greyscale), the improvements are minor but worthwhile. Taking the software in the same order as in the original review in issue 31:

Phone

This section benefits from a shortcut to a new 'ink note' function, an empty page on which you can scribble free-form text and doodles after launching a call. Each note created in this way is then accessible later using the main Notepad application under 'Extras'. Also in this section on both R380 models are a large-screened telephone interface, a truly excellent call logger



The opening R380e screen



Doodling away in an ink note while on the phone

("How long was that data call I made at 3pm on Tuesday last week?") and a good hierarchical browser for all telephony settings.

Contacts

Much the same in essence as its Psion ER5 counterpart, this is essentially the same as in the earlier 's' model, with a few extra editing options in the SIM import/export section. The R380e version of Contacts is quite a bit faster than in the original R380 flash ROM, although later service releases for the latter went some way to fixing any slowness. As with most modern telephones, the operating system in flash ROM

('firmware') can be updated free of charge at any Ericsson service centre.

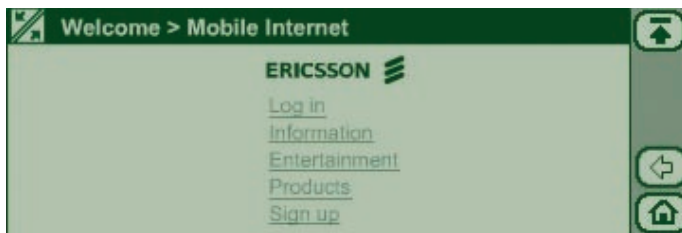
Getting contact details into the R380e from an existing Psion palmtop can either be done one at a time using infrared or all at once using a PC-based PIM.

Messaging

Email and SMS functions are almost unchanged in the R380e, and are as effective as ever. It really pays to keep your Contacts store as up to date and populated as possible, as email addresses and SMS (mobile) numbers are harvested seamlessly by the R380 Messaging applications. And of



Contacts demonstrating some of the integrated advantages of a smartphone



*Browsing
the 'Mobile
Internet'*

course tapping on the email or SMS icons within a Contacts record also brings up the appropriate New Message dialog.

Calendar

Unchanged in the R380e, this is an adequate but slightly disappointing port of Agenda, mainly hampered by the lack of screen real estate, which forces scrolling in many dialogs.

WAP Services

As on the original R380s, there's unfortunately no provision for adding third party software. Although this is a pity, given the platform's heritage and possibilities, I've been gradually tuning in to Ericsson's thinking, whereby WAP sites take up at least some of the slack.

For example, there are Internet WAP sites for many things you might wish for. Need hotel or restaurant recommendations in a hurry, or directions from A to B? Need a street plan of a particular post code area? Need to convert a number into different units or currencies? All these and more are available in seconds (literally), delivered by a bookmarked WAP site.

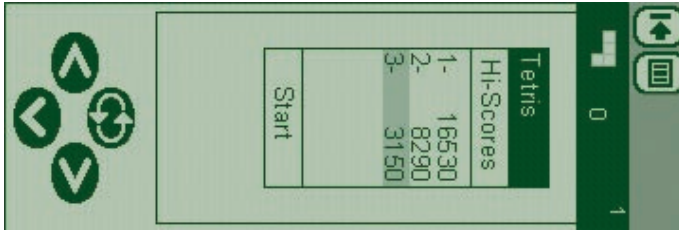
Accessing the much-hyped 'mobile Internet' in this way costs money, of course, but averaged over a year the outlay might well

be less than you'd have spent purchasing dedicated EPOC applications to do the same job. Against the WAP version is the quality of screen output compared to a dedicated third party application. In its favour is the fact that all information is bang up to date and interactive, rather than only being as new as the date your purchased EPOC software was created.

Although not immediately apparent, the WAP browser engine has been upgraded, supporting the 1.2.1 standard with 'enhanced WTLS security, class 1 & 2'. Good Bookmarks and History functions mean that, once set up, navigating the WAP universe is quick and frugal with your GSM telephone bill.

The R380 range comes pre-configured to use Ericsson's own Mobile Internet WAP gateway, but it's a simple matter to set up extra WAP profiles/gateways. Many of these are free to access, so WAP browsing with an R380 shouldn't cost more than the basic charge per minute for the call to your normal Internet Service Provider.

Interestingly, the R380e's slight bias towards corporate customers shows up in WAP Services, with development kits available for producing custom WAP applications to run locally, in the browser.



*About to start
a game of
Tetris*

Extras

The R380e offers two genuinely new applications here, both bolted inside an existing icon. There's the aforementioned 'ink note', which integrates into the R380e Notepad (Jotter) system, each doodled page having a plain text title. There's also a Tetris clone, included under 'Game'. Clock and Calculator are unchanged, as is the multi-layered System settings section.

The package

The Ericsson R380e comes with a comprehensive package, including belt-clip case, hands-free kit, international power adap-

tors and data lead to a PC. An infrared window on the R380's side means that you can use the phone as an infrared modem if you'd rather use a Psion or Palm PDA as your Internet device.

The R380e ships with an improved battery, capable of 1200mAh, a 25% increase from the original. With moderate use (on/in use all day, half a dozen calls) a full charge will last around two days, so easily sufficient for leaving the charger behind on an overnight business trip. There's no planned support for GPRS, which is a pity.

The supplied (PC-only) synchronization software on CD works with Lotus Organizer (v4.1 or 5.0), Outlook, Notes,



Schedule+ and Exchange, with the full version of Lotus Organizer 5.0 being included in case you don't already have a desktop PIM. Synchronization works well enough, if a little slowly. Perhaps showing the software's Symbian heritage, I managed to get a "No smartphone found" error on several occasions, requiring a reboot of the desktop—something that will probably sound familiar to long-time PsiWin users.

Bizarrely, although Ericsson shouts about the R380e being able to use USB ports for connection to the desktop, there's no USB cable in the box and no mention of it in the manual. The standard serial cable is adequate though, especially considering the small amounts of data being sent up and down the link (typically a few hundred kilobytes at most for a full backup).

There's one slight obstacle to using the R380e as your principal PDA—you can't turn the phone part off and carry on using the rest of the applications, as you're required to do when flying, for instance. Also, your phone has to be switched on all night if you want it to wake you in the morning and it has to be on during meetings, etc. Although Ericsson provides 'Silent mode' and 'Vibrate' toggles to make sure

you're not audibly disturbed, it does take half a dozen stylus taps (or key presses in 'flip-closed' mode) to set these up each time.

Should you sell your Psion palmtop and buy a R380e to serve in its place? Only if you feel you can live with the reduced application set and if you think you can get over keyboard withdrawal symptoms. Should you replace your old GSM mobile with a R380e? Almost certainly, if you get offered one at a good price, as it's a superb smartphone that can assume most communications functions that you might need. Existing R380s owners are unlikely to find enough that's new to warrant the cost of an upgrade.

The emerging world of the smartphone and communicator is a complex one, with plenty of room for models with a character all of their own. The Ericsson R380 is one such device and in its R380e incarnation is a design classic in its own quirky way.

You can try out an R380e 'simulator' at www.sonyericssonmobile.com/R380e/html/simulation.html

Steve Litchfield



Ericsson R380e

From: www.sonyericssonmobile.com

Availability: Now

Price: £50-250+ VAT (with/without contract)

Quality ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

WAP for all

Although especially useful on the Ericsson R380 series, by way of providing applications and content, the WAP sites listed here form a useful list for all palmtop and smartphone users. On the Psion Revo and 5mx you'll need a copy of Psion's official WAP browser. Many non-budget mobile telephones also have WAP browsing software built-in, as of course does the Nokia 9210 communicator.

Note that every site and address given below has been briefly checked on the Ericsson R380e used in this review, although we can't vouch for the content in detail. Note also that, as with web pages, WAP sites come and go. If an exact WAP address doesn't work any more, reduce it to the basic domain name (e.g. reduce *wap.bt.com/wap/dq/dqws.jsp* to *wap.bt.com/wap/*) and try again.

TITLE/ADDRESS	COMMENTS
After Dawn <i>www.afterdawn.com/wap</i>	MP3 and DVD news
Ananova <i>wap.ananova.com</i>	Press Association site - excellent for news, entertainment and sports
Aramaix <i>www.mignacco.it/aramaix.wml/#tit</i>	Fabulous Web to WAP convertor. Text only and you're limited by how much fits on-screen at any one time, but you can now browse genuine web sites from a WAP device
Autosport <i>wap.autosport.com/news.asp#news</i>	Motor racing results and features
Browser Test <i>wap.mci.co.uk:80/Browser/#card1</i>	Tests your WAP browser's WML capabilities
BT Directory Enquiries <i>wap.bt.com/wap/dq/dqws.jsp</i>	Look up UK phone numbers, both residential and business
E-Street <i>mmm.e-street.com</i>	Guide to eating, drinking, shopping or touring around major UK cities
Financial Times <i>wap.ft.com</i>	Top quality market data and financial features
First Direct <i>www.firstdirect.com/wap/index.wml</i>	UK Banking by WAP. Check your balances and outgoings instantly
Genie <i>www.genie.co.uk/#index</i>	Consumer portal, various useful and not-so-useful content
Google <i>wap.google.com</i>	WAP and web searches, with some web content auto-converted into WAP. Note especially the search options, where you can limit searches to just WAP sites if necessary
Home of Formula One <i>wap.homeoff1.com/index.wml</i>	Formula 1 results and tables in an instant
Hotel Catalogue <i>www.hotelcatalogue.net/cgi/h.pl#i</i>	Huge worldwide database of hotels, with full details and a booking facility

TITLE/ADDRESS	COMMENTS
Kizoom Train Times <i>railtrack.kizoom.co.uk</i>	UK Railtrack timetables online
London Travel News <i>tflwap.gov.uk</i>	News about London tubes, trains and buses
Mail2WAP <i>www.mail2wap.com</i>	WAP access to your POP3 mailbox, including sending replies. Not needed on the R380, but worth noting
Maporama <i>wap.maporama.com</i>	On-screen street maps of most places on the planet!
MapQuest <i>wl.mapquest.com:80/gb/#start</i>	Directions and travel guides
Mopilot.com <i>Mopilot.com/wml/index.wml#start</i>	Portal, mainly for games
SonyEricsson Mobile Internet <i>wap.sonyericsson.com</i>	The R380's dedicated portal - not much here, but may be useful to bookmark
Wapaw <i>www.wapaw.com</i>	The biggest WAP directory available
Wapcardz <i>www.wapcardz.com/a.php3#index</i>	Send and receive greetings cards by email and via the Wapcardz site
WApjag <i>wapjag.com/#katalog</i>	Diverse content site, including news, travel and shopping
Yahoo directory <i>uk.wap.yahoo.com/raw#c</i>	Another WAP catalogue, run by the oldest Internet directory service

Setting up WAP

To get connected, you'll need the following:

1. A WAP browser (supplied with the R380, Nokia 9210, and on the CD accompanying newer Psion models).
2. Unless you're using an R380 or 9210, a mobile phone with an infrared modem.
3. A data-enabled SIM card. If your SIM is not data-enabled, contact your mobile phone network operator.
4. Access to a WAP gateway.

WAP gateways

To access WAP services, you need to set up your device with a gateway. Most mobile phone operators have their own gateways, and there are other open-access gateways available. Until GPRS becomes widely available for WAP, note that you'll be charged the cost of a phone call per minute for WAP access. In the UK, network Operator O₂ offers up to 500 minutes of free WAP access per month.

Dialup settings

If you have already set up your machine for connection to the Internet (for surfing or email), it may be possible to access WAP using your existing dialup connection. If not, set up an Internet Service account. Here you'll need the name the account and add the dialup phone number, the username and password.

Browser settings

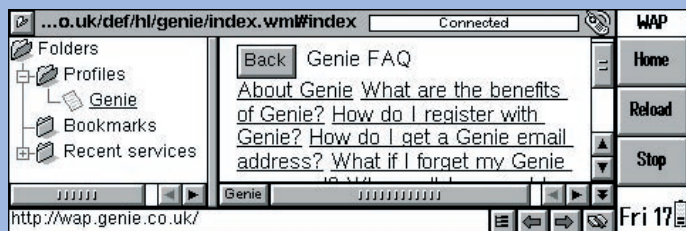
From the WAP browser, create a new profile (WAP access point). You'll need to name the profile, then add the gateway address and the home page. You also need to tell the browser which dialup account (and modem) to use.

For full details of how to set up WAP, plus lists of WAP gateways, see www.filesaveas.com/wap.html.



Setting up a WAP profile

Viewing a WAP site on a Psion Revo



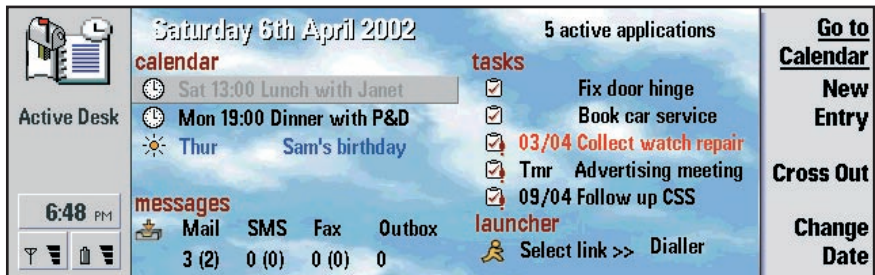
Active Desk

One aspect of the Nokia 9210 that's universally accepted as inferior to its Psion predecessors is its desktop interface. Rather than showing a straightforward list of top-level files and folders, everything in 'Desk' is simply an alias of selected programs and commonly-used data files. Aside from this, Desk shows precious little useful information, apart from the usual time, signal strength and battery status display.

Active Desk complements Desk by adding an alternative 'System' screen from which you can view all upcoming Calendar events and Tasks, together with the current status of the messaging system and a basic application launcher.

The Active Desk screen comprises four 'hot' areas, navigated by the Tab or Arrows keys. The top left quadrant of the screen is used to show upcoming Calendar events, top right shows Tasks (to-do items), bottom left are figures showing the number of read and unread mail, SMS and fax messages in your mailboxes and outbox, and the bottom right shows the name of a single application or file set to launch with a press of the 'Launch selected' option in the right hand Command area.

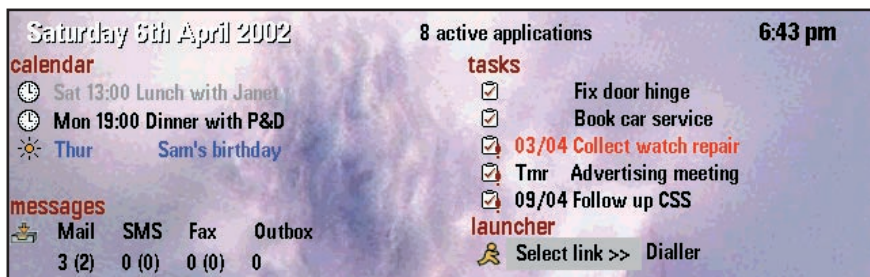
Aside from viewing a summary of current appointments and other commitments, Active Desk also provides a convenient control centre from which new Calendar and Task list entries can be added, and new SMS, email and other messages created with a single keypress. These options



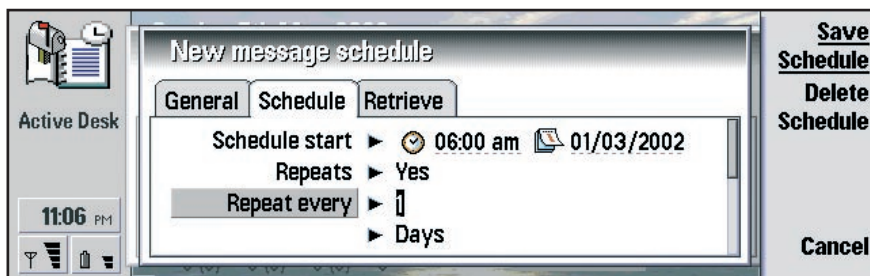
The Calendar display makes good use made of colour to show future/overdue items



An alternative font size setting. Note the contextual Command area options



Full screen mode shows more text for each event



Setting up a schedule for automatic email retrieval

appear in the right-hand Command area, depending upon which of the four 'hot' areas is currently selected, and also include crossing out or changing the date of a highlighted Calendar or Task entry, creating new messages and launching selected Desk items from a pop-up list.

When adding new entries, Active Desk launches the appropriate application, cleverly jumping straight back to Active Desk when complete.

Pressing the [Delete] key on a Calendar or Task entry will erase it directly, without having to go into the relevant application to do it. Pressing [Enter] on an entry will jump to the appropriate point in Calendar, ready for editing. Pressing [Enter] with the cursor in the 'Messages' quadrant of the screen will launch the Messaging application.

Beneath the more obvious points, a quick perusal of Active Desk's menu structure reveals a wealth of other useful features. While within Active Desk, up to 10 applications can be set to launch directly with a press of the 0-9 number keys. Also, Active Desk itself can be set to launch automatically after a system reset, together with up to 10 more chosen applications and documents (all of which must be present on Desk) plus any or all of the Messaging, Contacts and Calendar applications.

Full day and date information is displayed at the top of the screen, plus an optional item showing the total number of applications currently open on the device. A full screen mode, toggled by a keyboard shortcut, gives a wider space for viewing the text of Calendar entries, by removing

the Command and Status Indicator areas to the left and right of the screen.

The most powerful hidden feature of Active Desk is Message scheduling—the ability to initiate an Internet connection and send/receive email messages automatically at a prearranged time of day. It's simplicity itself to set the software to go online at (say) 6am every day, log into any or all of your email accounts and retrieve either message headers or entire messages up to a given size. It will disconnect automatically when complete, and beep to indicate that you have mail, if you wish.

You can choose to set Active Desk to do this only on certain days, set a maximum connection time limit, the number of dialling retries if the first attempt fails, and decide whether or not to send any waiting messages from your outbox while it's connected. This feature is also part of Cibenix's new Active Mail application (to be reviewed in the next issue), but is a great feature to have included in Active Desk, and reason enough to buy the program, without even considering its many other useful features.

Active Desk is enormously configurable overall, from choosing which of your Task lists show through onto its desktop, selecting text colours for different types of Calendar event, picking background images, choosing whether to bring Active Desk to the fore whenever the 9210 case is opened, how many days in advance events should appear in the on-screen lists, etc. Keyboard shortcuts are also well implemented, with appropriate keystroke combinations for creating every kind of Calendar event and message type directly from the Active Desk screen.

With so much on offer it's hard to find serious fault with Active Desk, and the majority of 9210 users will want to use it as their central control area from which all events and messages are handled. By default it's accessed via the 'Desk' button, with a second press toggling to the built-in Desk application. Given that up to 10 Desk items can be launched via single keystrokes from the Active Desk screen at any time, most people will find little further use for Desk. In addition to the 10 direct launch options, whenever the 'Launcher' area is highlighted, the entire contents of Desk can be accessed from the pop-up list, plus two more that can be launched directly from the Command area and one from a 'Launch selected' option.

The biggest criticism of Active Desk is probably that it inevitably takes up a few hundred kilobytes of precious memory while running. Because it's something you'll most likely never close down, it effectively becomes a permanent overhead that will further reduce your baseline amount of free working memory.

Taken into the context of its price—\$25, unless you don't use the Nokia's Calendar, Task lists and Messaging, it's tough to find any good reason *not* to use Active Desk.

Steve Clack

Active Desk

From: www.cibenix.com

Availability: Now

Price: \$25

Quality ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

Power Data

With the existence of SmallBase, a capable database application for the Nokia 9210 (reviewed in the last issue), it's satisfying to see that Epocware's Power Data takes a slightly different approach, concentrating more on overall usability than some of the more esoteric database features.

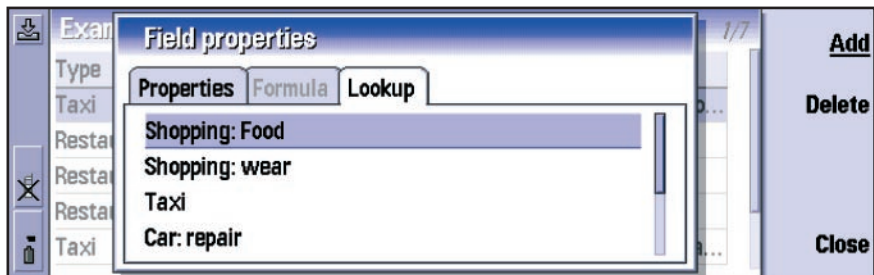
Whereas SmallBase incorporates a lot of functionality, this does make it more difficult for novices to get to grips with. Power Data turns out to be more of a natural replacement for the Data application built into earlier Psion models, and is almost as quick and easy as Data to set up.

When creating a new database, Power Data offers an excellent selection of more than 40 pre-configured templates for such

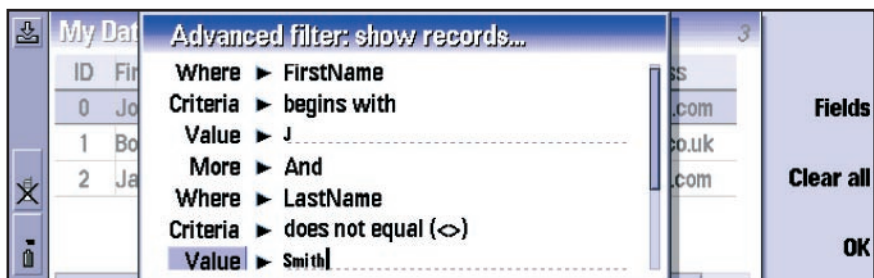
things as address lists, books to read, a diet log, employee details, household inventory, invoices, order details, service records, time billing, and so on.

If choosing one of the templates, Power Data then presents a list of all the suggested fields and settings, any of which can be edited or deleted before finally selecting 'OK' to proceed and create the empty database template.

Of course, it's also possible to set up databases from scratch, with fields of your choosing and the choice of password protecting any database at the point of creation—a feature you can't later decide to add once the layout has been set. Data can be imported from other sources in CSV and DBF formats, and exported as CSV, DBF, plain text or HTML.



Field types include multiple choice lists and calculated fields



An immensely powerful record filtering system—should you need it

As with SmallBase, it's possible to set up multiple data tables within a single database, one area where Power Data is much more powerful than Psion Data. With a file-based structure just like Word and Sheet, it's easy to access individual Power Data files directly via Desk shortcuts or File Manager.

Possible field types are 'Text', 'Number' (integer), 'Currency' (floating), 'Yes/No', 'Date', 'Memo' and 'Embedded file' options. These mimic the field types available within Psion Data, with 'Embedded file' logically matching Data's object embedding facility for documents and images.

Also familiar to Psion Data users will be the standard List and Card views, with the useful option to hide selected fields in the List view, with the usual find and sort options.

Almost buried from view until you read the manual is an option to create pop-up multiple choice lists—a huge time saver when adding entries to your completed database. Equally hidden at first glance is the ability to set numeric fields to display a value calculated from other fields. It's thus possible to have one field to display a unit price and another to show quantity, with a third calculating a total price by multiplying the first two values together. This feature is implemented in a more friendly manner than with SmallBase, allowing the user to enter the required formula with simple field names rather than SmallBase's incongruous system of variables.

Other useful features include the ability to hide selected fields from the card view, indexing of fields to making sorting faster, bookmarking of records and a powerful filtering system to display only those records that match specified criteria. Advanced

filtering options include SQL queries and an option to save filter criteria into templates that can be reused. The latest version of Power Data also adds SmallBase's colour filtering system, whereby data in selected fields will appear in different colours based upon set criteria.

Reporting is nicely implemented too, making it easy to analyze data by summarizing key fields. Power Data will calculate the maximum, minimum or average values of any field across the database, grouping records by any field and giving a count of the total number of records being summarised.

Power Data works impressively well with large databases, and more than 40 language dictionary Power Data files are available for free download from the Epocware web site, some containing well over 100,000 records.

All in all, Power Data lacks some of SmallBase's more exotic features, such as DTMF dialling and certain field types, but for most Nokia 9210 users (there's sadly no Psion version), Power Data offers plenty of power in a package that's slightly more polished and a little more intuitive to use.

Paul Nelson

Power Data

From: www.epocware.com

Availability: Now

Price: \$25

Quality ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

TimeTool

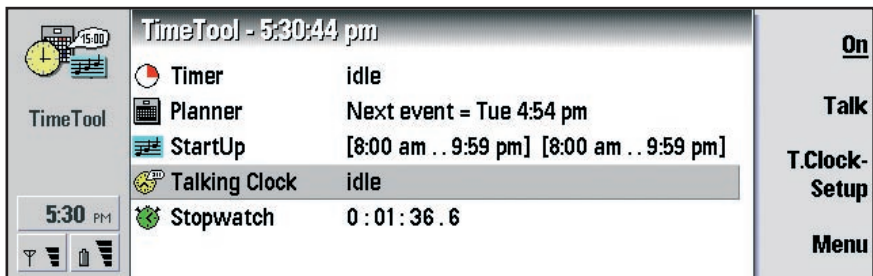
Most of us have a need for a stopwatch or countdown timer on occasion, if only when boiling an egg. TimeTool presents a whole suite of time-related utilities in a single package.

Opening up TimeTool displays a list of the five components: 'Timer', 'Planner', 'StartUp', 'Talking Clock' and 'Stopwatch'. As well as providing a central launcher for the five programs, this main screen also shows the current time (with second precision) in the top status display, and execution options for the currently highlighted tool in the right hand Command area. The current running status of each of the five tools is also shown adjacent to each one, giving an overview of anything in progress.

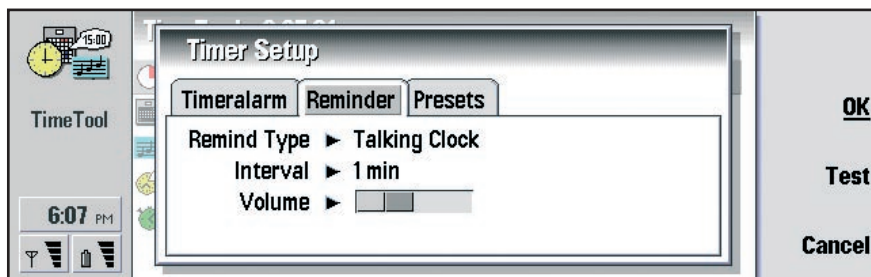
The first of the tools, Timer, is a simple countdown timer, with five configurable time presets and the ability to set any time value between 1 minute, and 23 hours 59 minutes. There are options to set the volume of the alarm that will sound after the prearranged time has elapsed and the type of sound that will be played. A number of suitable WAV files are supplied with the program, plus you can either use your own WAVs or the built-in 9210 alarm sounds.

Another neat feature is that reminders can be set to sound at 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 30 or 60 minute intervals during the countdown process. These can either be configured to *speak* the current number of minutes left, with the 9210 emitting phrases such as "Five minutes left", in a pleasant, German-sounding female voice, or to speak the actual time of day, such as "it's four thirty five pm". Timer works to the nearest minute, so is not useful for precise timing operations.

The second tool, Planner, can be used to set a number of alarm items that you would otherwise set from within the Calendar application. TimeTool avoids having to over-populate Calendar with one-off events and items that don't necessarily impact on your daily timetable. The additional flexibility of TimeTool's alarm sounds also makes it easier to distinguish different event types more clearly. As with Timer, alarms can be set as various sound and speech options, and in common with all the other tools, alerts can also be displayed on the front panel phone display, from where the alarm can also be acknowledged and cancelled. As well as simple alarms, events can be set in timer mode, so the device will give relevant countdown sounds until the moment the event is due. Planner events are unfortu-



TimeTool's main control centre, from where the five components are accessed



Configuring spoken reminders to sound during a countdown process

nately not designed for repeating occurrences, which is a pity—considering how nicely configurable they are.

StartUp, the third program in the suite, is almost certainly the least useful. It simply sounds an alarm (the usual choices apply) whenever the 9210's casing is opened and/or closed. It can be set to operate every time this happens, between certain hours only, once per day, or once per AM and PM. Beyond pure novelty value (you can set a psychedelic, reverberating “goodbye-bye-bye” to sound when the casing is closed), it's perhaps most useful as a speaking clock, to sound whenever you open and start working on the device.

Talking Clock, the fourth tool, will speak the time at preset intervals of 5, 10, 15, 20, 30 or 60 minutes. It can be set to sound between specified hours, and can be configured independently depending upon whether the 9210 case is open or closed.

The final part of TimeTool, Stopwatch, shows a running stopwatch on screen, accurate to the nearest second, and with a simple ‘Lap’ time feature. Compared to the other components, Stopwatch feels like something of an afterthought. It would have been preferable for this program to use its own screen display rather than just running

in the main TimeTool window. That way it could have displayed a running list of lap times, perhaps showing an oversized time display to make things clearer.

TimeTool would be of little use if it could inadvertently be shut down while running in the background, so sensibly it can be configured only to close down from within TimeTool. Thankfully, given the 9210's requirement for frequent resets, it can also be configured to re-launch automatically.

With the addition of support for repeating planner events and a rather more polished stopwatch program, TimeTool would be almost beyond criticism. It's still very good in its present form though, and with a price of only €20, it should find a home on many 9210 Communicators.

Steve Clack

TimeTool

From: www.timetool.de

Availability: Now

Price: €20

Quality ★★★★★☆

Value ★★★★★☆

The 9210 survival kit

Steve Clack looks at the current state of play of software for the Symbian-powered Nokia 9210 Communicator and offers some practical advice on getting the most from the device

Since its release almost a year ago now, the Symbian-powered Nokia 9210 Communicator has become something of a phenomenon. Rated as the top selling PDA in Europe over recent months, this first incarnation of a new breed of palmtop computer/mobile phone hybrid is already a major success.

5mx successor?

Although in many ways it's hard to class the Nokia 9210 as a true successor to the Psion Series 5mx and its siblings, there are a surprising number of similarities, ranging from the fact that many of the built-in 9210 applications are virtually identical to those on earlier Psion models, to the significant number of major Psion software applications that have already been ported to work on the Nokia.

Making the switch

If you're considering making the switch from a Psion palmtop to a Nokia 9210, don't be duped into thinking of it as a phone first and foremost. It may look like a phone, but it's really a powerful, expandable computer that comes with an excellent suite of telephone applications to round off the package.

If you use your existing Psion for a lot of data entry then you'll certainly miss the keyboard quality you've grown accustomed to, but even a mediocre keyboard is better than no keyboard at all, and you'll still be able to enter data more efficiently than would be possible with a keyboardless Palm OS handheld or Pocket PC.

If you're looking for a modern alternative to your existing Psion PDA then you could always consider keeping the Psion primarily for when you want to write a long report or build a giant spreadsheet, using a Nokia 9210 for all your traditional PDA functions.

Balanced against the lacklustre keyboard and a few other limitations that we've outlined in this feature, the 9210 benefits from an excellent battery life, a beautifully clear and crisp screen and great integration between its telephony features and the other applications. Importantly, as Nokia builds on the 9210's success to date, we'll undoubtedly see some even more powerful successors coming to market over the coming months and years.

Over the next 10 pages we'll look at the major features of the 9210, where everything fits in with existing Psion models, and whether the Nokia 9210 is for you...

THE HARDWARE

Aside from the obvious limitations of the rather cramped and calculator-like keyboard, how does the Nokia 9210 feel to use? Slightly thicker than a 5mx, two-thirds the width and only slightly heavier than a Revo, it's a surprisingly convenient device to carry around, despite being unfashionably huge and brick-like as a mobile phone. If it were *only* a phone then you wouldn't consider toting such a beast, but with all the power of an EPOC computer built-in, it's far less bulk than carrying a separate phone and PDA.

In normal operation it's possible to run a 9210 for several days without recharging (a process that takes no more than a couple of hours), and it can be used for a solid day's work without having to worry about running low on power.

The lack of a touch screen takes quite a bit of getting used to, and this does make a few applications almost impossible to implement on the 9210, such as sketching programs. However, the four Command buttons down the right side of the screen work very well for most applications, and are sometimes even preferable to a touch screen. The multi-way 'Arrows' key to the bottom right of the screen is the biggest long-term annoyance of the whole user interface, and even after extended use it's all too easy to move the cursor up when you intended to go right (for instance), unless you take great care to press this oversized button at precisely the right point.

Overall, the 9210 generally makes good use of the available space within the casing and, most importantly, the hardware is solid and robust enough to withstand heavy use.



MEMORY AND EXPANSION

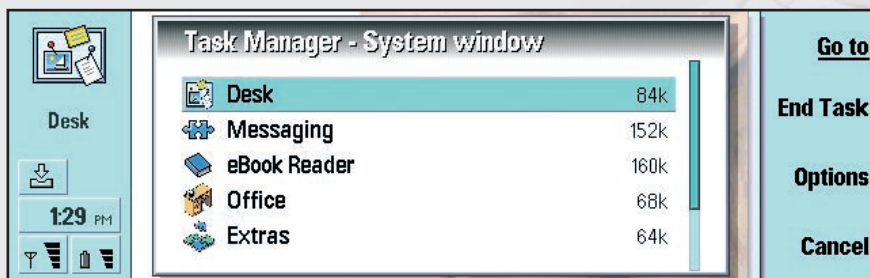
The biggest overall criticism of the existing Nokia 9210 design is the lack of available memory. Although virtually all add-on software can be stored on the 16MB MMC card that's supplied with the unit, there's still precious little internal storage space free for applications and their temporary working files. From the 4MB of internal space on the device, you'll be lucky to have more than 3MB free once the operating system has taken its share. Note also the limitations caused by having only 8MB of SDRAM execution memory. In practical terms, although the 9210 is multi-tasking in just the same way as earlier EPOC models, the lack of memory will drastically limit the number of applications and files that you can keep open at once.

To make matters worse, applications don't always release resources as they should when closed down, leading to a gradual reduction in available space as you use the device, even if you open and close applications as you go. In extreme cases, such as graphics-intensive games, you'll need to perform a soft reset to free up enough memory to allow you to launch the program—an immensely frustrating

limitation, particularly when the standard technique for performing a reset is to take the battery pack out of the machine.

The situation is thankfully not as bad as it sounds, though. With the addition of a must-have utility, **Task Manager**, it's possible to check the amount of free memory at any time, compress memory automatically (and invisibly) at regular intervals, shut down unused applications more easily, and even perform a reset *without* removing the battery. You'll still have to get into the habit of closing down most applications when you're not using them, but TaskMan makes day to day operation of a Nokia 9210 a lot less frustrating.

Because all your software can be stored on an MMC expansion card, you'll probably run out of space on the supplied 16MB card quite quickly. It's important to note that although MMC cards *look* almost the same as the more common SD cards, the latter won't fit in your 9210, as they're a little thicker than the MMC variety. 64MB is currently the largest MMC that's widely available, although 128MB cards are now starting to appear.



If you own a Nokia 9210, you need Task Manager

DESKTOP CONNECTIVITY

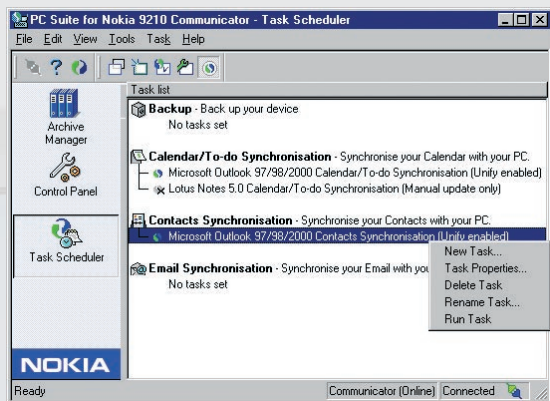
Nokia's PC connectivity takes the form of Symbian's EPOC Connect 6 suite, modified to Nokia's requirements. Supplied on the CD that accompanies the 9210, installation is straightforward and, once complete, two new applications appear in the Windows Start menu:

1. 'My Nokia Communicator' - similar to PsiWin's 'My Psion', this allows access to the 9210's drives for file handling and copying files to and from the Communicator.
2. 'PC Suite for Nokia 9210 Communicator' - essentially the control centre for connectivity, and includes backup, restore and data synchronization.

As with PsiWin, document conversion is achieved by dragging files between the Communicator and the PC. The application works out what file you're copying, and lets you pick a file format to convert to. The conversion is generally acceptable, but as with the converters found in PsiWin, expect some formatting and document attributes to get 'lost' along the way.

Synchronization of data with the PC is achieved with Task Scheduler. The main screen offers the categories 'Backup', 'Calendar/To do Synchronization', 'Contacts Synchronization' and 'Email Synchronization'. Selecting one of these brings up a wizard to allow the setup of a specific task. Tasks can be set to be performed manually, 'when connected' or at scheduled times. The application comes with a 'Unify' button, essentially a one-click 'do all my tasks' button, which is a handy way of running a batch of synch operations. Oddly, if you want to run a single task, it's a case of right-clicking on it and picking the 'Run task' option—the fifth entry down the popup menu—hardly intuitive.

Synchronization of Contacts, Calendar and email works for most desktop PIMs, but if you're used to PsiWin you'll find that synch operations between PC and 9210 go at a crawl. As an example, a synch of 900 Contact entries takes around 45 minutes first time around, an operation that is completed in well under 10 minutes on a 5mx or Revo.



All in all, the PC Suite is an adequate connectivity product—a little slow and clunky in places, but it gets the job done. It's worth checking which version you have installed on your machine, as the latest version (1.20) contains several enhancements and fixes. It is available for free download (21MB) from www.nokia.com/phones/productsupport/9210/downloads.html.

OFFICE APPLICATIONS

Psion owners will be relieved to hear that most of the core built-in applications on the Nokia 9210 are remarkably similar to their ER5 predecessors. The Nokia **Word Processor** is almost the same as Word on a Psion, right down to features such as templates, outlining, object embedding (minus Sketch objects, of course) and formatting options. To improve desktop compatibility it's possible to save files directly into Microsoft Word 95, 97 or 2000 format, though as we mentioned back in issue 35, anything much beyond basic formatting tends to be lost in the conversion process—a serious limitation. Mysteriously there's no option to password protect Word Processor documents, making it necessary to lock the entire device or use third party security solutions if you want to protect your text from prying eyes.

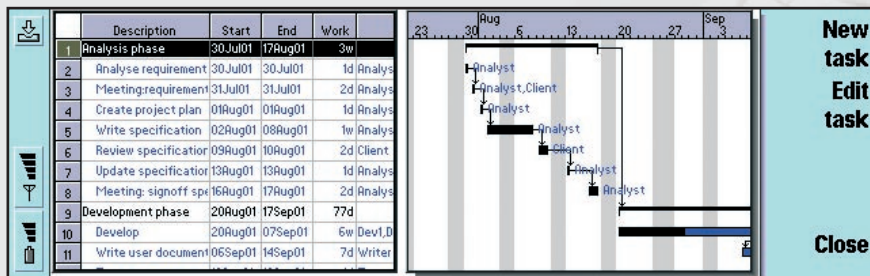
Sheet on the 9210 is also similar to the ER5 version, again lacking password protection but with the long awaited addition of multi-sheet workbook support. It's possible to save into Microsoft Excel 95, 97 or 2000 formats if desired, with the usual caveat that complex formatting is not preserved.

Calendar, Nokia's equivalent to Agenda, is an improvement on ER5 versions, with the addition of an excellent Month view.

The lack of a built-in database application was a major limitation when the 9210 was released, but this has been addressed by two third party solutions that have appeared in recent months: **SmallBase** (reviewed in the last issue) and **Power Data**, reviewed on page 33 of this issue.

An encouraging number of important ER5 applications have also been ported to the 9210, now making it possible to do many of things you could on a Psion handheld. These include **Plan 6**, an ER6 port of Andy Clarkson's excellent project planner, a powerful text editor, file encryption utilities, dictionaries, home banking and expense management software.

The most notable omissions to date are probably macro support and a file conversion system such as Neuron's superb nConvert—which would solve the 9210's poor built-in convertor problem at a stroke.



Plan 5 is just one of several powerful applications now available for the 9210

TELEPHONY, SMS, FAX, EMAIL, WEB AND WAP

As you'd expect from such a hybrid device, the Nokia 9210's integration of telephone functions into the basic palmtop computer is second to none. Look up somebody in the **Contacts** database and you can quickly set up an SMS, email or fax, or call the person with just a single button press. Incoming calls are immediately identified with the name of the caller, plucked straight from Contacts, and the 9210 will keep a comprehensive log of all your incoming and outgoing communications. Web and WAP browsers are included for good measure, though web browsing with a 9600bps GSM connection is naturally a rather painful experience.

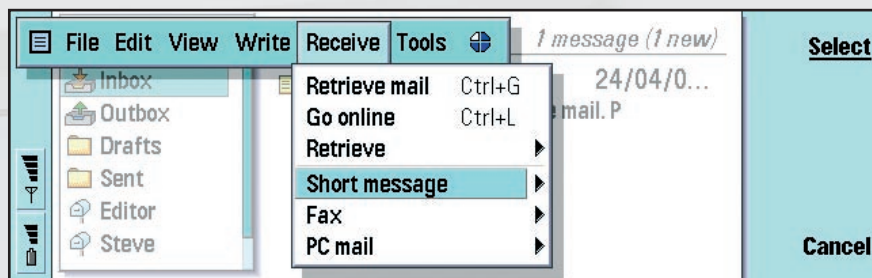
Although it's not of course possible to access PDA functions with the phone at your ear, the microphone and loudspeaker quality are so good that you can use the 9210 in 'speakerphone' mode if you need to access programs while you're talking.

The 9210's email client will be instantly familiar to Psion users, with the additional feature of being able to limit downloads to just headers or messages with a set size limit if desired. By using Cibenix's **Active Desk** (see page 30) or its new **Active Mail** product, you can set the 9210 to connect

and retrieve messages automatically at a set time of day. This is a good way to save on connection costs and perhaps have your messages waiting for you when you wake up in the morning. Active Mail also allows you to mark messages for download, synchronize email folders, and retrieve mail for several accounts at once.

Aside from the limitations of the keyboard and GSM connection speeds, the 9210 makes a superbly integrated messaging centre. If you need to keep up with emails while on the move, this is almost reason enough to buy the Nokia 9210.

The lack of high speed GPRS connectivity is a pity, and something that will most certainly be addressed in future models (though not the 9210i—see page 4). Although an inelegant solution, PSILoc's **Extended Internet** will allow you to make a GPRS connection via any GPRS phone with infrared. It also allows a landline or RAS connection to be made via a serial cable and external modem. For connecting to other systems, you'll find a terminal emulator and FTP client now available, and Bitween's **Remote Control** application will even let you access your desktop PC wirelessly from the 9210!



The 9210 is perhaps the best handheld communications centre currently available

REFERENCE WORKS

As with any handheld computer, the ability to store important reference data is as vital as being able to run spreadsheets and a diary while on the move. Third party software is now available to address most needs in this area.

With PDF (Adobe Acrobat) files now so prevalent, it's a good thing that **PDF+** is now available in a 9210 version, which runs exceptionally well on the high resolution colour screen. As with all previous versions of the software, it works with files in native PDF format, so files downloaded directly via the email or web application can be read without conversion.

The 9210 also makes an exceptionally good ebook reader, with two readers now available. Epocware's **eBook Reader** is particularly good, and handles the popular Palm PDB format as well as plain text and HTML (text only) formats. As with PDF+, files can be download directly into the 9210, ready to read.

Masses of Psion users rely on **TomeRaider** as a means to access various reference works, and a 9210 version is now available. It has an identical feature set to the ER5

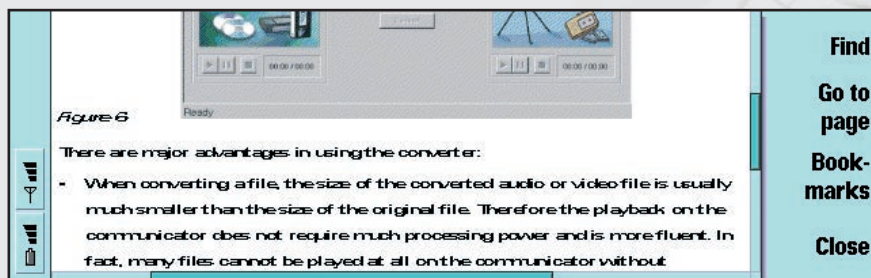
Psion variant and, although not quite as fast, will still search the entire body text of a 10MB file in a minute or so.

Mapping and route planning software has always been immensely popular on Psion handhelds and, although there's no Route Planner available as yet (an online route planning service is currently under development), TomTom's **CityMaps** will help you to find your way around more than 100,000 European cities.

While travelling from country to country, there are a huge number of translation dictionaries available from various vendors, including more than 40 language combinations downloadable for free as **Power Data** database files.

For English language word definitions, TomTom's popular **Cobuild English Dictionary** is now available for the 9210, as well as the usual huge selection of dictionaries, encyclopaedias and thesauri in TomeRaider format.

Overall, the Nokia 9210 makes an excellent tool for accessing reference material, benefiting as always from the excellent clarity of its screen.



Full colour Adobe Acrobat files on your smartphone, with PDF+

SOUNDS AND IMAGES

Armed with a surprisingly high quality loudspeaker that supplies alarm sounds at a volume loud enough to wake the dead, the 9210 makes the perfect alarm clock. Nokia's system of 'Profiles' lets you configure exactly how loud your phone ringtones and alarm sounds are at a given time, so you can easily save yourself from embarrassment during meetings and avoid being woken in the middle of the night by unwanted phone calls. The ability to set a 'VIP list' is particularly handy, and lets you specify a group of people whose incoming calls will ring the phone—ignoring all those outside the list.

With a **Recorder** application like the one on Psion handhelds, it's a pity there's no means to actuate voice recording without opening up the casing, launching the application and selecting 'Record'. PSILoc's **External Dictaphone** software fixes this omission, making it easy to start and stop a voice recording using the external phone buttons.

If talking to your 9210 appeals, **NeuVoice Dialler** accepts voice commands in place of keyboard input.

You might even like to try your 9210 for music playback. PSILoc's **Multi Media Player** works with both MP3 and WAV files, and comes complete with graphic equalizer. It's naturally little better than cheap transistor radio quality, but occasionally useful nonetheless.

The 4096 colour display of the 9210 allows photographic images to be displayed with better quality than any previous EPOC device, though the rather squat aspect ratio of the screen does tend to hamper things a little. The built-in **Imaging** application can be used to view photos or other graphics in JPEG, TIFF, GIF, BMP and MBM formats. Related images can be put into separate 'Albums' if you wish, zooming and rotating as necessary to optimise the display.

The built-in **Video Player** application is of little practical use beyond simple short video demonstration clips, but it works for both Nokia's own NIM format and industry standard AVI files. For very simple animated presentations, **AniGif** lets you show animated GIF files on your 9210.



NeuVoice Dialler lets you speak the name of a contact to make a call!

TOOLS AND UTILITIES

Although it's easy enough to set the entire device to lock itself after a specified idle period, one of the biggest omissions from the 9210's built-in software is the ability to password protect individual files.

The best workaround for this at present is the excellent **Zip Manager Pro**, which makes it easy to create password protected Zip archives—adding files to the archive as you go along. The process of extracting files takes no more than a few seconds, and although admittedly less convenient than application-based password protection, it does allow absolutely anything to be passworded. Zip Manager Pro also allows zipped backups, and for applications to be compressed into zip format to save space while they're not being used. Files can also be zipped and inserted into an outgoing email with a single step.

If you're looking to store all your PIN numbers, credit card details, and so on, a separate security application such as **Code Vault** or **Secure Box** will do the job admirably.

If you add a lot of software to your 9210, you'll find the Extras folder becoming over-

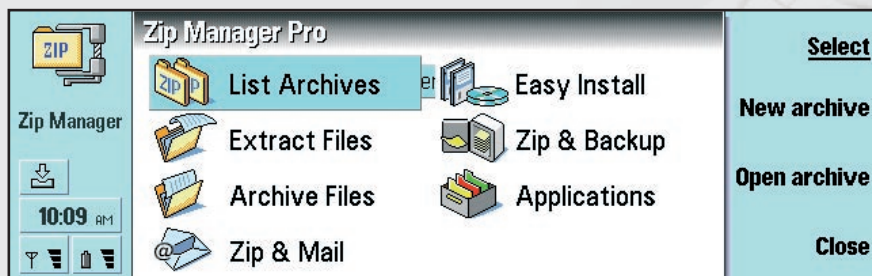
populated with a long list of all the applications you've installed. To get things into better order, a copy of **Extended Extras** will let you add new empty folders and group applications into logical categories within them.

To liven up the interface, **Colors** gives you complete freedom to customise the appearance of every element, making it as lurid or as dull as you like. To improve the usability of the desktop interface, **Active Desk** (see page 30) works wonders.

For a useful set of time-related tools, including a basic stopwatch and countdown timer, try **TimeTools** (see page 35).

To extend the 9210's printing capabilities, **Extended Printers** provides a 'print to file' option which works with graphics as well as text, and is particularly useful for exporting your call log file to a PC.

For performing quick calculations from within any program, **SideCalc** is a handy pop-up calculator and units convertor. Although not a full-blown macro solution, **Remapper Pro** (see page 19) can be used to reassign keys and add text shortcuts for commonly used words and phrases.



Zip Manager Pro offers file encryption, archiving and compressed backups

GAMES AND LEISURE

Unsurprisingly, software houses have been relatively quick to develop games for the Nokia 9210, with more than 30 available so far. Interestingly, very few of them are ported versions of existing ER5 games, with most being completely new to EPOC.

The combination of good, colour screen and sound quality makes it possible to create games that look more polished than anything we've seen on Psion handhelds to date. **Bounce**, supplied on CD with the 9210, is a good demonstration of what's possible on the device, and a very engrossing game in its own right.

Several third party titles offer exceptionally attractive graphics, including **Ski Flying** (see page 19), **Doom** and **V-Rally**, the latter being one of the few games that started life on ER5.

The limited available memory of the 9210 unfortunately makes it commonplace to have to perform a reset to clear space. It's even necessary to turn off the phone completely in order to save memory before running a few of the most graphically ambitious games.

If you're looking for something that won't force you to close down everything in order to run it, there are a number of classic games available, including Chess, Solitaire, Checkers (Draughts), Backgammon and Reversi, many of which will run happily in under a megabyte of execution memory.

Aside from pure games, MTIT's **Golf Assistant** is a must-have support tool for golfers. It can be used to keep score, hold a database of information on clubs and holes, and even email or SMS your scores to a friend.

For the wine enthusiast, MTIT's **Wine Guide** includes a vintage guide, tasting notes and a database to store details of your cellar contents—with a full stock control system if you need it.

Movie buffs will undoubtedly want to load up a copy of **TomeRaider** with the well known Internet Movie Database—a great way to look up details of almost any film in a matter of seconds. Several versions of the database are available (all on the Palmtop CD, or from www.memoware.com), right up to a 14MB version containing a detailed description of almost every film since 1920.



Bounce, supplied on CD with the 9210, boasts excellent sound and animations

ODDS AND ENDS

The last 10 pages have hopefully convinced you that the Nokia 9210 is evolving into a genuinely powerful handheld computer that can take over most of the tasks you might have asked of your Psion palmtop, plus a few that no Psion could handle. It's still a long way from perfect, with the shortage of internal memory and poor quality of the 'Save as' export options being the most severe.

From a personal perspective, I find the 9210 far preferable to a Psion for general organiser functions such as diary, to-do lists and quick jottings. Although I'm not a big mobile phone user, the ability to keep up with emails and make calls without carrying around a second box more than makes up for the 9210's relatively bulky form, and the integration between phone and PDA is just superb. The 9210 is very good for carrying reference information too, and it's very liberating to be able to keep databases, dictionaries and street maps to hand on a phone device that's always in my pocket.

Keep up to date!

If you're using a 9210 that's more than a few months old, make sure that you're running the latest version of the operating system

and all the supplied software applications. From the Control panel, choose the 'About product' option and scroll right to the bottom of the text. If the display shows that you're running anything other than the latest firmware version (currently 4.13), contact your nearest Nokia Service Centre via www.forum.nokia.com and request an update. You'll need to send the unit away for a couple of days to get the upgrade done, but it's free of charge within 12 months of purchase. The Service Centre will upgrade all the applications on your memory card as well, though you can always download and install the latest versions yourself from www.forum.nokia.com.

To keep your 9210 running as smoothly as possible, get into the habit of checking the Nokia Forum at least once a month, as a number of the updates that have appeared so far have resulted in vastly improved stability, and things should continue to get better.

Software availability

All of the software mentioned in this feature is available from the Nokia Software Market, at www.softwaremarket.nokia.com, as well as from each company's own web site.

NOKIA Nokia Software Market by Digital River, Inc. Search Software

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Business Content Tools Entertainment Personal Productivity

Welcome to the Software Market



TOP 10 SOFTWARE

1. [NouVoice Dialler](#)
2. [Remote Control for Nokia 9210/9290](#)
3. [Active Desk](#)
4. [Celesta-myStyle](#)
5. [Extended Communicator Suite](#)
6. [Nokia 9210](#)

8 great prizes to be won!!

FIVE Proporta cases and THREE 4-way multi-function stylus pens worth almost £300 in total!



You choose your prize: any Proporta case (including Pod hard cases for the Series 5/5mx in a range of metallic painted colours), Shell hard cases for the Revo in a range of metallic painted colours, Semi Rigid Cases for the Series 7/netBook, and funky neoprene cases in any one of three two-tone colours (available for any model), or multi-function 4-way pointers (suitable for all Psion models). All winners will also receive a free pack of Proporta's colourful translucent plastic pointers for the Series 5/7 or the Revo.

All entries must be submitted by 30th June 2002. The decision of Palmtop Publications and Proporta is final. Last issue's correct answers were: 1. The 7650, 2. OPXscan, 3. PDF+.

Just answer the three questions below and submit them on the special page at PalmTec's web site on www.proporta.com/palmtop.htm, where you will also be required to state your prize preference.

1. What Nokia 9210 program would you use to help boil an egg?
2. Where can you view a five year old version of your favourite web site?
3. What's the first Symbian device to use UIQ?



Paul Nelson shares some of his top tips for the Psion and Symbian word processor

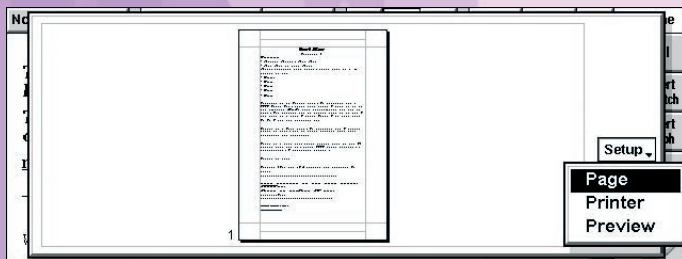
Word on the Psion and its close cousin the Nokia 9210 Word Processor remain the most powerful text editing tools in the entire palmtop computer world. Here are my top tips for getting the most from them.

In a Psion, create new Word documents using [Fn]+[Word] on the System screen. Surprisingly often, you'll find yourself wanting a virtual clean sheet of paper and it's a bore having to wait while Word reopens your last document and then having to use 'Create new file...' to open a new document.

On the Nokia 9210, simply highlight 'Word Processor' in the 'Office' screen and choose 'Preferred application...' from the 'Tools' menu. Then, whenever you want to open a new blank document, use [Ctrl]+[Office] from within any application. If you already have a Word Processor file open it will take you directly to that, in which case you'll then need to type [Ctrl]+[N] to create a new blank document.

Along the same lines, on a Psion I'd recommend setting up your System screen Preferences with 'Open multiple files' set to 'Enter'. This makes it much easier to keep more than one Word document open at the same time. Specifically, should you already have a large, complex Word file open and then you happen to tap on another Word document on the System screen, the latter will open up in a new instance of Word.

2 Don't be afraid of using 'Print preview', even if you're not yet in a position to output to a real printer. EPOC does a passable job of laying out text and objects in the main editing window, but it's certainly not true WYSIWYG. If in doubt about how text and objects will flow down the page, go into 'File | Printing | Print preview'. All the other printing setup dialogs can be accessed from here, with the resulting changes in layout shown on the graphical preview.



Previewing a document's layout and length

3 Why not use Psion Word's 'File | Password' feature to use the application as the basis for your own vault of usernames, passwords, PINs and confidential numbers? You can be as fancy as you like in the formatting and styling while storing information in a free-form manner, knowing that the entire document is solidly password-protected should anyone steal your palmtop or gain access to your backups.

There's no password protection for the Nokia Word Processor, so use either Zip Manager Pro (as outlined on page 45) or a third party application (see also page 45).

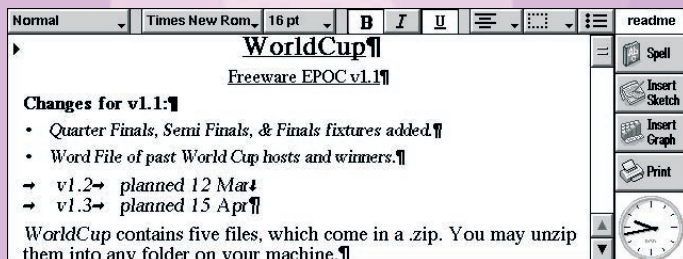
4 Talking of backups, it's well worth making extra copies of *really* important documents as you go along, using 'Save as...' (e.g. 'Monday', 'Tuesday-pm', etc.) Word's own 'Edit | Undo' command is virtually worthless and only works for undoing specific text deletion—even then only for

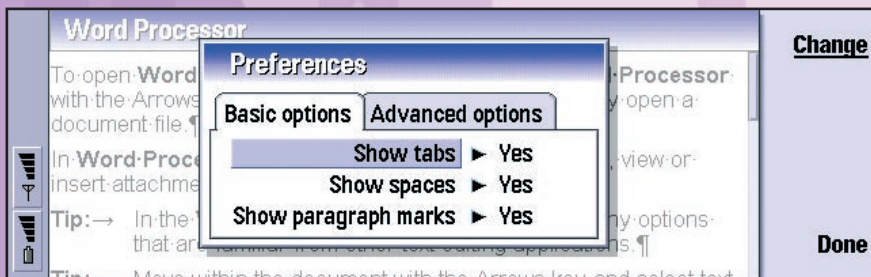
the very last thing that was deleted. Before deleting or replacing anything important, why not take a few seconds to press [Shift]+[Ctrl]+[S]? When the document's finally done, you can rename it to the original desired name.

5 Always bear in mind the eventual destination of your Word file. If it is to remain on your EPOC palmtop, you can embed spreadsheet tables, Sketch images and other objects to your heart's content—the more you add (within reason), the more useful content you can include in your document. If there are several, related Word files, you might even consider embedding each inside a top-level 'master' Word document, thus keeping them together in a single, easily beamed or copied whole.

If, on the other hand, your destination is to be a desktop (e.g. Microsoft Word) document, it's better not to try to be *too* fancy on the palmtop. Although embedded objects

With various hidden entities shown, a document's makeup becomes clearer





Showing hidden characters on the Nokia 9210

are usually transferred after a fashion, you'll almost certainly have to rework them all on the desktop anyway before publication. It's often more productive to create these extra elements on the desktop in the first place.

6 Frustrated when your word processor seems to have a mind all of its own? Go into 'Tools | View preferences' and turn on the options to view tabs, spaces, paragraph ends, forced line breaks, etc. They do clutter up the main editing window slightly, but you get used to them and they're worth their weight in gold when trying to work out why your characters and/or cursor don't behave quite as you think they ought to.

7 Be sure to use 'styles' for any document longer than a few hundred words. Yes, it's easy to select and format specific text phrases (or even paragraphs) one at a time, but when working with a large document (perhaps a few thousand words) it's very easy to find yourself taking ages to apply similar formatting over and over again.

Styles are the solution. Once you set a paragraph to have a particular style, changes can be made across the entire document by simply adjusting the style itself, with the changes immediately permeating through the entire document.

You can see the styles currently available for your current document using the menu command 'Paragraph | Style gallery...', (or



Setting up styles is almost always worthwhile for all but short documents

via 'Format | Style...' on the Nokia 9210) where it's easy to change them to suit your needs, perhaps even adding new styles of your own—for example, 'Address', 'Note', 'Quote', and so on. After going to this effort, you'll probably want to use these styles again in other documents, which is where the next tip comes in handy.

8 Use templates whenever you find yourself working with a document and/or set of styles that you'd like to start with in the future. Don't worry that setting up templates might take ages—it's as simple as opening an existing document that you like the look of and using the menu command 'File | More | Save as template...' (or 'File | Templates | Save as template...' on the 9210). In most cases, you'll want to edit out any one-off text, and also check things like page margins and style names and settings before actually creating the template.

Templates are simply Word files stored in a special location: \System\Templates\Word on a Psion (or wherever you like on the 9210), but you don't need to know this to access them. At any point in the future, open up any Word file on a Psion and use the 'File | Create new file' command (you can't, alas, do this from the System screen). The resulting file dialog has an extra line marked 'Template', from which

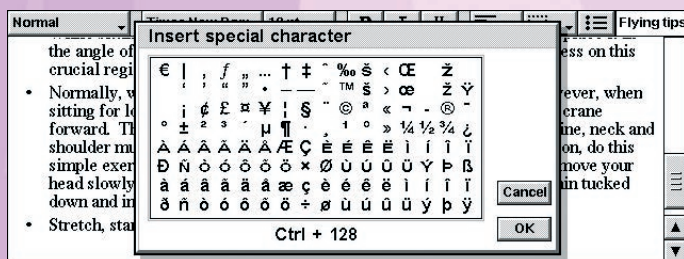
you can elect to use any previously-saved template as the starting point for the new document.

On the 9210, use 'File | Templates | Select template', and select the folder where you previously stored the template you wish to use.

9 Use EPOC's Zoom functions properly. They are there to help you see your text more clearly on the screen, so don't be tempted to set your text in an artificially large font to gain the same effect. If one of the standard zoom levels isn't sufficient for your needs, remember the 'View | Set zoom...' command, where you can set a precise level of document magnification.

10 You'll have seen this tip before in Palmtop, but it's well worth repeating. To insert special characters (foreign letters, symbols, etc.) into *any* text line on a Psion, even within a dialog, simply press [Shift]+[Ctrl]+[C] and you can take your pick from the selection shown. On the 9210, a quick press of the 'Chr' key will do the same thing.

Picking from the table saves having to remember specific character codes, which is of course the other, more difficult way to insert special characters, using [Ctrl]+[character code required].



An easy way to insert special characters without having to remember their codes

Getting to grips with Macro5

In the final part of the series, Steve Clack delves further into one of EPOC's most powerful third party utilities

Over the past five issues we've looked at the different kinds of shortcuts it's possible to create with Macro5, going on to build our own. We then briefly examined the process of editing a macro's 'program' code, introducing the concept of editing existing macros to tweak their functionality and add features that can't be incorporated when in the usual 'record' mode.

The way forward

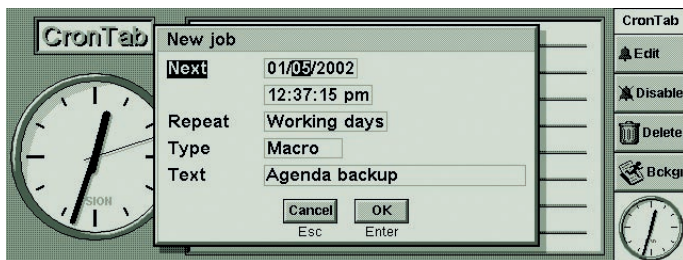
Having now been introduced to all the basic concepts of Macro5, the way forward to become an expert is to read though the program's documentation and familiarise yourself with more of the 50 or so keywords that we discussed in the last instalment. Another good way to learn is to try out some of more than 150 pre-written macros that you'll find at the main Macro5 web site, pnicolas.epocboulevard.com. The same site also points to all the other main resources (a few of which are sadly no longer valid), including more excellent macros at Mario Collado's www.pSIONwelt.net/MarioCollado/macro.html.

If you're trying to learn from the examples, first load up and run the macros to see what they do, then open up the OPL editor and browse through their contents, line by line, and try to understand what each step is doing when the macro executes.

If you find any useful bits of code in these (freeware) macros, you're quite at liberty to copy them from the program editor and save them for future 'recycling' in your own macros.

Remote control!

If you'd like the ability to run macros automatically at a set time of day, check out Pascal Nicolas' CronTab, available from the main Macro5 web site. With CronTab you'll be able to set your Psion to copy file backups between your internal memory and CF disk, or defragment its memory in the middle of the night, while you're not using it. The CronTab part of the site also contains some suitable sample macros to help get you started.



Use CronTab to auto-execute macros at a preset time

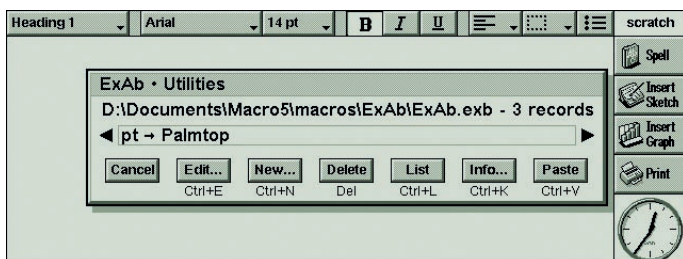
Getting clever

To see what's possible with a little ingenuity, take a look at the collection at pda.tucows.com/epoc/macros5.htm. These include some superb work by Huub Linthorst, such as S5mboles (reviewed in full in issue 31), a complete system for inserting clip art and decorative heading text into documents. Such is the sophistication of S5mboles that it looks like a full-blown application rather than a collection of macro code, making the whole thing doubly impressive.

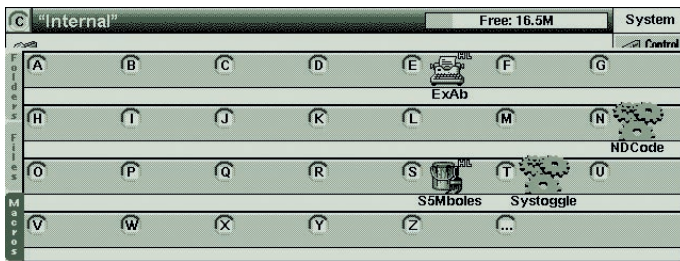
Another equally impressive and perhaps even more useful macro-application from Huub is ExAb, short for *Extended Abbreviations* (see page 79 of issue 30 for more details). This allows you to create a separate database of words and phrases that can be recalled with a quick hotkey press and inserted into an underlying document, much like other standalone applications such as MagicKeys and Autotext.

As with S5mboles, ExAb is accessed from within the Macro5 'shell', and in principle can be edited and extended, just like any other macro.

S5mboles offers an immensely impressive macro-based clip-art system



ExAb will insert shortcut text items and more...



Pre-built tools such as Exab often come with their own custom icons, but are stored as normal, in the three Macro5 'panes'

No need to write your own?

With so many pre-written tools and macros readily available, you may find that you seldom (if ever) feel the need to create your own macros, relying entirely on pre-made solutions. Now you've learnt how to operate the Macro5 interface, it's a straightforward matter to import these pre-made macros into whichever positions you choose in the three Macro5 panes, subject to the usual maximum limit of 81—enough for even the most voracious user.

A few pitfalls

As we've already stressed earlier in the series, one of the biggest potential pitfalls when writing and running your own macros is playing them back 'out of context', that is when the macro is able to go through its process of mimicking a series of keystrokes, but does so from within the wrong program, with potentially dangerous results. If your

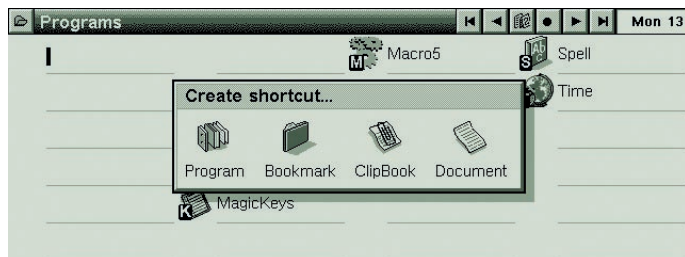
macro isn't working, *always* check this first, as it's invariably the most likely culprit.

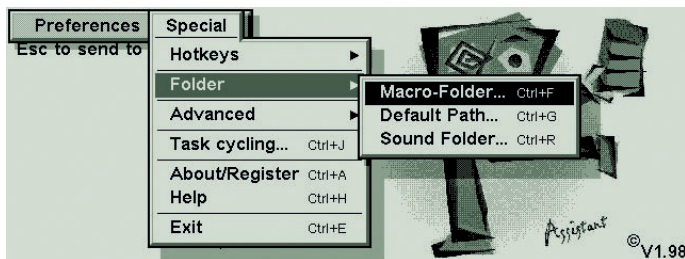
Another common pitfall is to create a macro that makes reference to a file, application or folder that has subsequently been moved or deleted. Remember that Macro5 can't intelligently keep track when you change the location of one of the resources it needs, so use caution when setting things up.

The future for Macro5

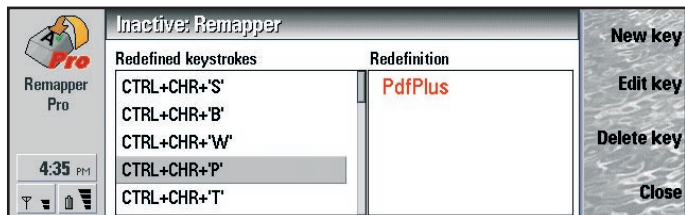
Such has been the universal popularity of Macro5 over the past five years or so, and despite the fact that it's undergone no active development for almost three years now, a number of other programs have incorporated support for it. As an example, interface enhancement programs such as HotKeys (featured in issue 24), ExtraBars (reviewed in issue 20) and Assistant (reviewed in issue 33) all allow Macro5 shortcuts to be executed directly

Neuron's excellent HotKeys program offers Macro5 support and more—all with a friendly face





Assistant offers 36 useful functions, including full support for running Macro5 shortcuts



Remapper Pro is no substitute for Macro5, but it does add some shortcut functionality to the 9210

from within their own shell, effectively becoming macro launchers in their own right.

Some of these add-ons have the advantage of presenting a slightly more user-friendly face than Macro5, so if you have a use for the other features that such a program can provide, you can use *that* as your main macro control centre, without sacrificing any of the ability to create and run them from Macro5 as well. We'll be doing a roundup of these interface enhancement programs in the next issue, and looking at how they fit in with Macro5.

ER6 and beyond

Sadly, Macro5 development now appears to have ceased, with no plans to port it (or something similar) to the Psion Revo (as mentioned in the last issue) or to later Symbian-powered devices, such as the Nokia 9210. Unless that situation changes, the nearest thing for the Nokia at present is MIT Systems' Remapper Pro (see page 19). This doesn't allow recording of complex shortcuts, but it at least has a facility to launch frequently used programs and files with keyboard shortcuts, and to assign up to 64 characters of text to be inserted into a document with a single hotkey stroke.

Of course, if anyone *does* develop a Macro5-like program for the newer Symbian machines, you'll very soon hear about it in Palmtop!

Working with Sheet

Steve Litchfield demonstrates some of the uses of Time and Date formatted cells, in this, the fourth part of our tutorial series for relative beginners

In the previous instalment, I promised to expand on the use of times and dates in Sheet, having already explored their formatting and the way in which specific points in time are stored (see issue 36, pages 53-4).

One of *the* most common spreadsheet requests we receive is from pilots looking to use Sheet to log their hours and activities. Aviation, palmtops and a spreadsheet are a natural fit, replacing all those interminable paper tables and forms. This is also an excellent way to demonstrate using both date and time calculations in a real world example.

I've no detailed knowledge of aviation myself, but I understand that a pilot essentially needs to record details of his or her trips, their duration and the total flying hours so far in their career. As a bonus for the purposes of this tutorial, we'll also calculate the length of their career in days. Have a look at the screenshot on the following page and you'll get the general idea.

It's important to understand, from the way that dates and times are constructed on the Psion as absolute differences from midnight on 31st December 1899, that there are some limits as to what can be calculated and shown. Usually, a moment's thought and common sense are enough to determine how to build your spreadsheet, but never forget the usefulness of trying different formulae and formatting just to 'see what happens'.

For example, it's easy to get Sheet to work out the difference between two dates. Cell B1 is formatted as a date and I've entered a specific day from a couple of years ago. Cell D1 contains "`=TODAY-B1`" and Sheet does the calculation to give the total number of calendar days since the pilot started flying. Although I could have used a separate cell to contain a manually-entered current date and referred the calculation to use this cell instead, Sheet's TODAY function is much neater and has the advantage that it's automatic. Whenever the spreadsheet is recalculated or opened afresh, the

Arial		10 pt	B	I	U							f(x)	Logbook
D7		=(C7-B7)*24											
	A	B	C			D	E	F					
1	Started:	15/09/99	Now flying for:			946 days	Total						
2		Total flying hours:	25			42 mins	25.70						
3													
4	Trip	Depart	Arrive	Duration		Hours	Mins						
5	Liverpool	12/03/2002 13:30	13/03/2002 00:15	10.750		10	45						
6	Bristol	18/03/2002 09:05	18/03/2002 13:07	4.033		4	2						
7	Reading	25/03/2002 10:10	25/03/2002 11:35	1.417		1	25						
8	Paris	27/03/2002 21:12	28/03/2002 02:30	5.300		5	18						
9	Edinburgh	01/04/2002 07:20	01/04/2002 11:32	4.200		4	12						
10													
11													
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19													

TODAY function inserts the current date where appropriate.

Cell D1 is formatted as 'General', as it's simply an integer (whole) number of days, despite the fact that its formula involves the difference between two *dates*. Remember again that date and time sums and differences can't be shown explicitly (e.g. 56 days, 12 hours and 31 mins)—all formatted dates and times are *absolute* and relative to the December 1899 start point.

A moment's thought and reflection on the statement above should convince you that a 'trick' is needed to construct a working logbook that *can* add up, subtract and display detailed times. In this case, we let Sheet do what it's good at (working with

would again ensure that Sheet's calculations don't get confused.

Cell D5 contains “=(C5-B5)*24” and is formatted as ‘Fixed’, providing us with a nicely calculated decimal number of hours between departure and arrival. E5 and F5 aren't strictly necessary from the point of view of calculating the total number of flying hours, but a real pilot would probably find them useful. E5 is (obviously) just “=INT(D5)” (i.e. the whole number part of D5) and F5 is “=(D5-E5)*60” (i.e. take away the whole number of hours and multiply up the fraction left to give a figure in minutes).

As further trips are flown, the pilot can use the formula copying and pasting tips we learnt in previous tutorials to create new logbook rows quickly and easily.

Finally, we need to perform a similar hour/minute breakdown of the *total* flying time. Never be afraid to use intermediate calcula-

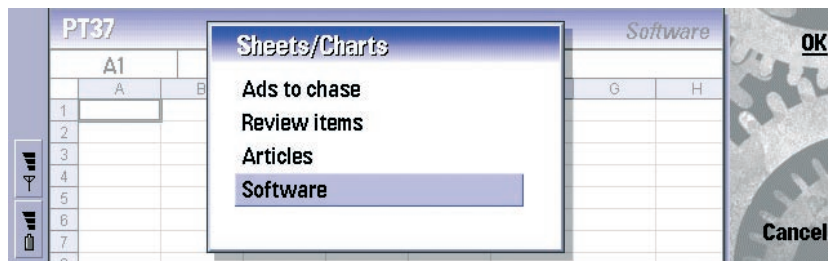
tions, perhaps in a cell off to the side of the spreadsheet, if it will save making any of your formulae too complicated. In this case, I've used a (greyed out) cell F2 to add up the total decimal flying time in hours, with the formula “=SUM(D5:D30)”.

Having calculated this total, we can refer to F2 again in cells C2 and D2 to break it down into hours and minutes, as we did for the individual journeys above. Cell C2 contains “=INT(F2)” and D2 contains “=(F2-C2)*60”.

At this point in the tutorial series, hopefully you're starting to realise that constructing, maintaining and using genuinely useful spreadsheets is a day-by-day task. Whether adding data, improving the layout, introducing new calculations or setting up graphs, your spreadsheets can be constantly-open, living entities that have the potential to replace entire applications and to improve the way you work.

Sheet on the Nokia 9210

Such is the similarity between Sheet on Psion (ER5) computers and that on the (ER6) Nokia 9210, almost all of the spreadsheeting tips we've given in past issues of Palmtop are equally relevant to the 9210. The two major differences are the way the 9210 handles charts and its ability to work with multi-sheet workbooks. We'll be looking at these features in more depth in the next issue.



The ultimate sub-notebook?

Laptop or palmtop? Steve Clack looks at where Psion's Series 7 and netBook fit into the grand scheme of things . . .



Despite being available for almost three years now, the Psion Series 7 and its enterprise partner, the Psion/Teklogix netBook, remain anonymous to a large proportion of their potential audience. Sitting somewhere in between palmtop and laptop computer, and with an operating system that's unfamiliar to the average PC user, the Series 7 and netBook were probably doomed from the outset to achieve only a tiny portion of their rightful sales volume. But how useful are they to the average Psion user and, more importantly, should *you* consider buying one?

Which is which?

Even seasoned Psion users could be forgiven for not knowing the differences between the Series 7 and the netBook. The Series 7 was originally designed for the consumer market, as an alternative to the Series 5mx, and was released a few weeks before the appearance of the Revo. The netBook was

marketed by Psion Enterprise/Teklogix as a 'corporate' version of the Series 7, with the ability to pre-load it solely with bespoke enterprise applications, rather than the standard suite of Series 5mx software.

Here are the important differences to be aware of:

1. The Series 7 ships with the standard Psion ER5 operating system built into ROM, which means that it can't be upgraded, other than with 'patches' to provide minor enhancements. The netBook has *no* operating system built in as such, but instead loads it into RAM from CF disk following a hard reset. This enables the operating system to be upgraded within a matter of seconds, though in practice no major updates have appeared to date. In principle this means that the netBook would be able to run almost any other computer operating system, such as ER6, Linux, and so on.

2. The Series 7 comes with 16MB of internal RAM, which is upgradeable to 32MB via a single (but expensive) 16MB add-on memory module. With the operating system all in ROM, around 13MB of the basic 16MB is available for storing files and running programs. The netBook comes with 32MB as standard, upgradeable to 64MB, but the ER5 operating system that's loaded from CF takes up at least 15MB of this, leaving just over 15MB free on the basic unit. Given the high cost of the RAM upgrades and the low cost of large CF disks, even most heavy users will find it far preferable simply to extend their storage space with a bigger CompactFlash, reserving the (perfectly adequate) internal memory of either machine as working memory for running programs.
3. The Series 7 operates with a 130MHz processor, whereas the one in the netBook runs at 190MHz—some 45% faster.
4. The Series 7 has a blue leather wrap on the casing—the one on the netBook is black.

Software

If you're used to a Psion Series 5mx or Revo then the good news is that there's almost nothing new to learn when moving to a Series 7 or netBook. All of the built-in applications are identical, except of course that they appear in colour.

Compatibility

Although not all third party Series 5 programs have been reworked to take advantage of the larger, colour screen of the

Series 7/netBook, many (including most of those written in C++) will automatically run full screen, without modification. The only notable compatibility issue is with games, which unless specifically written for the larger machines will run in a 'letterbox' window in the middle third of the screen. Being sensitive to processor speed, some real-time action games will also run too fast, as a result of the Series 7 and netBook's higher speed. As well as the usual suite of EPOC software, the netBook also comes with the Opera web browser (last reviewed in issue 35), a more powerful solution than the standard Psion Web application.

Colour

Even if you feel that colour is an unnecessary luxury, perhaps because most of your work is text-based, it's important to understand that a colour screen doesn't just allow you to view coloured text in a document. One of the big benefits of a colour screen is that of *contrast*, whereby rather than viewing the hard-to-read dark green text on a light green background of Psion palmtops, you'll be reading black on white, which is infinitely easier on the eye.



If you're planning to use your computer out of doors, be aware that as with any conventional PC laptop, the backlit TFT screen will be almost impossible to read in bright sunlight, unlike a monochrome LCD. Another point relating to the screen that's worth noting is that it only displays a palette of 256 colours, which makes it rather unsuitable for viewing photographic images. See our 'Photographer's assistant' feature in issue 35 for more details on this.

As a palmtop?

Although smaller than even the most compact sub-notebook Windows PC, a Series 7 or netBook is obviously much too big to fit into any pocket or handbag. It does take up minimal space in a briefcase though, and with a battery life of almost 10 hours it'll give you much more freedom to keep working while on the move. If you decide that you're happy to carry around the extra bulk (you can always hold it in your hand, like an oversized notepad) then transferring your data from an existing Series 5mx or Revo is simplicity itself. Just back up your palmtop with PsiWin, then merely restore the backup onto your Series 7 or netBook. All of your programs and files should work just as though they were on your original palmtop device. If you use a CompactFlash disk you don't even need to restore it from PsiWin—just take it out of your 5mx and slot it straight into the Series 7 or netBook's CF card slot.

As a laptop?

The Series 7 and netBook are undoubtedly more convenient to carry than a true laptop computer, but the benefits don't end there. Not only will EPOC allow you to keep

dozens of programs and files open simultaneously, there's also no concept of 'booting up', which inevitably takes time when using a PC laptop. By being able to keep all your commonly used applications and data accessible within no more than a couple of seconds, the instant-on convenience of an EPOC palmtop is preserved.

As far as the keyboard is concerned, if you can touch type on a full-sized keyboard then you'll almost certainly be able to do so on a Series 7/netBook as well, provided you don't have exceptionally large hands.

On the downside, there is ultimately a tradeoff in the power and flexibility of the applications you're running. If you really need a word processor that handles footnotes, a spreadsheet that runs pivot tables and a relational database that's compatible with what you use back in the office, then EPOC computers just can't provide the tools you need. Because of the supreme convenience of the Series 7/netBook's overall size, battery life and practical multitasking capabilities, it's worth considering whether you can live with a few trade-offs though. Maybe you can still get 90% of your word processing done while travelling with a Series 7/netBook, relying on a minimal amount of final polishing on a desktop computer when you get back to base? Or perhaps your access to the corporate database can be satisfied by exporting key fields into a Data file for the duration of your travels?

Two's company

If you're an existing Psion palmtop user and find that a Series 7 or netBook suits your needs then you're not obliged to give up your handheld in deference to the

larger device. With a copy of the excellent freeware EPOC Sync (www.freepoc.de - covered back in issues 31 and 34) it's quite workable to keep key files and folders synchronized between the two computers. That way, you can carry and use whichever device is most appropriate, depending upon where you are and what you're doing. On an important business trip, why not take both along? The combined bulk of the two is still a lot less than most laptop computers, and if one of the two Psions were to be lost, damaged or unexpectedly fail, you'll have a spare on hand—a peace of mind you could never achieve with a laptop.

Expandability

As well as the CF card slot, both Series 7 and netBook have a second expansion bay for PC Card devices. This can be used to add conventional PC Card memory modules, but via a suitable adaptor (an excellent range is available via www.ampliotech.com), it's possible to use a second CompactFlash, a MultiMedia Card (MMC) as used in the Nokia 9210, a Secure Digital (SD) card as used in Palm OS handhelds, or even a Sony Memory Stick. If you happen to be travelling with a Series 7/netBook and a handheld or smartphone that uses such an expansion card, you'll be able to back it up to the Psion's internal memory or CF card—such is the benefit of having a portable computer with two expansion slots.

The other (CF card) slot is 'Type II' rather than the 5mx's Type I, so is able to accept special cards such as the IBM Microdrive miniature hard disk (see issue 28), which is currently available in sizes up to 1GB.

Another benefit of CF and other compact expansion technologies is that it's easy to

keep a pocketable backup of important files while travelling, simply by copying the necessary files across to a spare expansion card.

Connectivity

As far as connectivity goes, the entire EPOC range admittedly comes with a few drawbacks. Although suitable PC Card modems are readily available, Psion's free Ethernet driver software (for the netBook only) allows a PC Card Ethernet adaptor to be used for a high speed Internet connection via an ISDN router, but frustratingly the current version will not allow network drives to be seen from the Psion, or vice versa. Also, the lack of EPOC-specific drivers currently makes it impossible to use otherwise attractive PC Card-based expansion cards, such as GSM, Bluetooth and 802.11b wireless connectivity solutions.

A good solution?

Whether or not a Psion sub-notebook device fits your needs will depend very much on which of the aforementioned features (or lack of them) you find most important. Long-time Psion users will already be sold on the benefits of instant-on multitasking and a long battery life, and in many cases will have learnt to work around many of the limitations that would otherwise force them to use a conventional laptop PC while on the move. For those without a history of using Psion computers, the Series 7 and netBook still present an attractive proposition, either as a stand alone portable computer or for use in conjunction with a smaller palmtop device or smartphone.

On the

Our regular
look at what's
happening
online, and
where to point
your browser

NET



by Pete Sipple

Our survey says . . .

First, thanks to everyone who responded to our On The Net survey. Here's a quick summary of the sites that got the highest votes:

Software sites

The top three favourite sites for downloading software are:

❶ **Tucows** (46%) - the mother of all software sites, with a great search engine and scoring system. pda.tucows.com/epoc.html.

❷ **EpoZone** (22%) - with a top 40 of software downloads, a mailing list and the ability to list freeware, shareware and commercial software, this remains a popular site. www.epozone.com.

❸ **RMR Software** (18%) - rather than being a vote for a general software download site, RMR Software's site, www.rmrsoft.com, offers all the RMR titles, including RMRBank, RMRFTP and RMRNews.

Get talking

If you're interested in talking about Psions, Communicators and everything Symbian, here are the sites to try:

❶ **Usenet** (64%) - not actually a web site, but this got the bulk of the votes as the number one place to

talk with others. Top group with the most traffic is comp.sys.psion.misc, followed by comp.sys.psion.apps and comp.sys.psion.comm. By the way, if you're looking for a way of reading and posting messages to newsgroups from your web browser, give groups.google.com a try.

❷ **EPOC Chat** (19%) - hardly surprising that this site featured so high. Each Sunday you can join the live chat session, where you stand a chance of winning a prize. Go to www.epocchat.com for details.

❸ **PdaBuzz** (12%) - this site offers a chat forum similar to EPOC Chat, plus a discussion forum where you can pick a topic, read messages and post comments and questions. Sign up and get chatting at www.pdabuzz.com/Chat.

Best EPOC sites

Users looking for a one-stop site for news, information and software voted these sites the best of the bunch:

❶ **Revoworld** (32%) - a favourite with Revo users—even, it seems, with Series 5 users. Highly recommended are the 'cool stuff' and articles sections. www.revoworld.com.

❷ **3-Lib** (28%) - our very own Steve Litchfield's site (and no, it's not a fix). Articles, programming information, software downloads, dates for upcoming UK Psion meets,

and the home for PocketInfo. Hop over to 3lib.ukonline.co.uk.

⑥ **EpocZone** (21%) - also appearing in our Software top three. Tips, polls, reviews and interviews go to make this a very popular site. www.epoczone.com.

Honourable mention goes to **SymbCity**, which appeared in each category at least once, making it a popular all-rounder. www.symbcity.com.

Spice up your 9210

Fancy having Heather Graham, Jeri Ryan or Sarah Michelle Gellar in the palm of your hand? Make the best use of the 9210's colour screen, sound and video by downloading fun stuff from **N9210**. Colour schemes, fun, funky and some rather risqué wallpapers, sound clips and movies (including music video, comedy snippets and a Star Wars Episode II trailer). Have fun at www.n9210.co.uk.

Get listed!

If you've got a Psion, Symbian or communicator-related web site, stop by www.symbianpages.com. I bumped into a lonely-looking Rupert on the **Symbian Pages** stand at April's Developer Conference, and discovered that this site has been set up by Symbian to create a greater awareness of the Symbian world and the companies and individuals that make up the community. The site aims to be the definitive list of all Symbian resources, so submit your site today. If approved, you're allowed to add an 'as listed in the Symbian



Pages' button on your site.

Stop press:

Psion Computers announces the Series 5!

Old news? Absolutely correct, but with the 'Wayback machine' you can step back in time by up to six years. OK, so the site at www.archive.org isn't Psion or Symbian-related, but as it's so useful for everyone, I felt it warranted a special mention here. This site is a huge (and at 100 terabytes, I do mean HUGE!) archive of the Internet. Every few months, this site crawls the 'net, storing copies of the pages it comes across. As an example, typing in "www.psim.com" returns 188 matches back to January 1997



Series 5 Launched
by Psion Computers

A New Generation of
Handheld Computing Power

and, although there are a few broken bits, you can follow links, download images and files, and surf as if it were 1997. Great for finding removed data, tracing old web sites long since removed, or getting back a file you thought was long deleted. Stroll down memory lane at www.archive.org.

Have your say!

If you've not voted for your favourite site, you can still do so. We've changed the survey questions and are interested in receiving your comments.

www.petesipple.co.uk/onthenet.html

On The Net	
Psion's On The Net Questionnaire	
What is your favourite site for EPOC Software?	
What is your favourite site for EPOC chat?	
What is your favourite general Psion / EPOC site?	
Which is your main EPOC device?	
Anything you'd like to see in On The Net?	
What would you like to see featured in On The Net?	
What type of mobile phone do you have?	
Do you access the 'net from your EPOC device?	☐
Do you subscribe to Psiontop?	☐
What's your favourite Psiontop feature?	

Hints & Tips

**Every item published in this section wins the author
TWO free issues added to their subscription!**

OPL italics

I was going to send an email in to Q&A but I've now solved the problem myself and want to pass on the solution for others' benefit. On my Series 5mx, after over a year of use, all text in the OPL Program editor suddenly appeared in italics. Since there's no way to set an italic font in Program, I couldn't see why this had happened, nor could I restore it to using plain, non-italic text.

Psion's helpline could only suggest a hard reset followed by a gradual re-installation of my 30MB of applications and data, which wasn't practical. Instead, after various experiments, I tried deleting the '.ini' file for the EPOC Text Editor (I had previously downloaded this from Symbian's web site) and discovered that the OPL editor returned to normal.

The relevant '.ini' file is to be found in c:\System\Apps\TextEd. Re-running the text editor happily re-creates the file without messing up the OPL editor's font.

Russell Parkin, Allestree, Derbyshire

Remembering 'Home'

After a soft reset, the 'Home' city is changed in Time. To have the Psion remember your current home city after a soft reset, just add a new (imaginary, if you like) city using the 'Add city' command. For some reason, presumably because extra information gets written to the 'TimeW.ini' file, your current home city also then gets saved—and restored too, should you later have to do a soft reset.

This tip works for the Series 5mx, Series 7/netBook and Revo/Diamond Mako.

Vince Smith, Arlington, Tennessee, USA

Faster file dialogs

After upgrading my Series 5mx with a 256MB CF card and dutifully filling it with applications, I became frustrated by the way file dialogs now took much longer to appear on screen. It turns out that these can be speeded up somewhat by turning off 'Show System folder' in Preferences. In other words, you're telling EPOC to exclude the

Use arrow keys or the pen to place the cross on the map position for

**ZZNowhere
Reunion**

Cancel

Esc

OK

Enter



Time
Map
Alarms
New alarm
Mon8

**Adding an
imaginary city
to force Time
to save home
information**

Q&A

Get your Psion and
EPOC-related questions
answered by our
editorial panel...

Ageing CF disks

Q Due to a certain amount of unreliability on the part of my Psion 5mx, I have taken to keeping my main files (Agenda, Data, Word, etc.) on the CF card I always have in the machine. I feel that the information is much safer there, should I have problems while away from my PC. However, I understand that these cards have a finite number of read/writes that can be performed before they eventually wear out. Am I going to prematurely age my CF card by using it in this way?

Jonathan Thomas, Stoke on Trent

A Possibly, yes. Typical use of a master Agenda and/or Data file might involve hundreds of individual writes per week (many thousands per year) within the same physical area on a card. We have personal experience of a CF card which developed faults after being used for only a few months in this way. By all means make weekly (or even daily) backups of your most-changed documents onto CF, but it's a good idea to open the master files up from internal memory (disk 'C').

Corrupt file recovery?

Q Do you know anyone who has the expertise to recover corrupt files? My Series 5mx had a major hiccup

recently and many files got scrambled. I can still search my backed up versions using Windows WordPad, and most of the file is obviously junk, but I can see plain text details. Is there a better way, perhaps a dedicated recovery service?

John Pritchard-Williams, Kingston Upon Thames

A In the first instance you may like to try CheckDisk, part of Atelier's Essential Disk Utilities (reviewed in issue 18). This may be able to recover your file, though there's also a chance it might corrupt the file further. POS Ltd (see page 86) and 3-Lib (3lib.ukonline.co.uk) have been known to tackle data recovery. They'll search through corrupt files for required text fragments and then copy them back into a new document. Ultimately, the best protection is frequent and full backups, ensuring that if something does get scrambled then there'll be minimal effort required to restore a known good file and bring it up to date.

Summing up rows

Q I've been enjoying your tutorial series on Sheet. For vertical (column) totals I can highlight the cells and tap the SUM button, but can you tell me if there is a similar shortcut to SUM for horizontal (row) totals?

Graham Oppenheimer, Leicester

Arial 10 pt B I U [font settings] [background color] [border] [sum] [fx] sums							
F3		=SUM(A3:E3)					
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	1						
2	2						
3	3	4	5	6	7	25	
4	4						
5	5						
6	15						
7							

Tapping on the Sum button while at the end of a row

A Just move the cursor into the cell directly to the right of the row and tap the **SUM** button in the usual way, so long as there's nothing in the cell directly above it (otherwise it will try to sum this vertical column instead). If summing several rows, always work from the bottom row upwards, to avoid there being data in the cell directly above on each occasion.

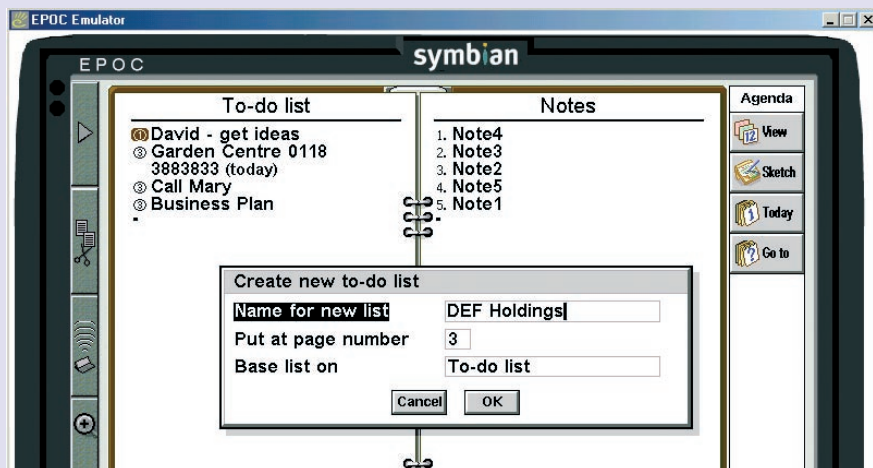
Agenda under Windows

Q I use Agenda extensively and run it with over 45 To-do lists. Is it possible to run the Psion Agenda

on a PC, as I find Microsoft Outlook to be very limiting.

Charles Vernon, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire

A Yes. It's perfectly practical to run EPOC at full-screen under Windows by installing any of the Symbian SDKs (www.symbiandevnet.com). Be warned that they are very large downloads. Once installed, use the excellent freeware EPOCSync (www.freepoc.org/EPOCSync.htm) to synchronize automatically between your backup Agenda file and the copy within the EPOC emulator file system.



Agenda running in the EPOC emulator, on the 'VGA' setting

SIS file blues

Q I have just developed a new problem when installing SIS files on my Series 7. If PsiWin install goes into 'Checking dependencies' then the process hangs and the wiggly line stops. Oddly, I can still access the Series 7 from the PC end even after it appears to have locked, so it seems to relate just to the installation process itself.

Andrew Mumford, Canterbury, Kent

A This is a frequently asked question for the Series 7. There's a subtle incompatibility between PsiWin Install and the Series7/netBook, which manifests itself in the way you describe. There's no known fix but there is a simple workaround—simply copy the SIS file over to the Series 7 (making sure it's not set to 'read-only') and tap on it on the Psion's System screen. Installation of the application will then work perfectly without bothering PsiWin at all.

Agenda fonts

Q Is it possible to change the default font/size for new Agenda entries on the Psion 5mx?

Ian Silvester, Moseley, Birmingham

A Although you can't tamper with this directly, and you can't change the way text looks in the data entry dialogs, you can of course use the Zoom command icon to zoom all text on-screen up to a larger size.

TomeRaider trouble

Q I have downloaded TomeRaider from your free CD, and was looking forward to reading my first ebook. I went to www.memoware.com and downloaded a few likely looking titles, but I could not get them onto my Revo. I kept getting a message about not being able to install Unicode programs. Do I need a newer version of EPOC?

Karen Murphy, Carrickfergus, County Antrim

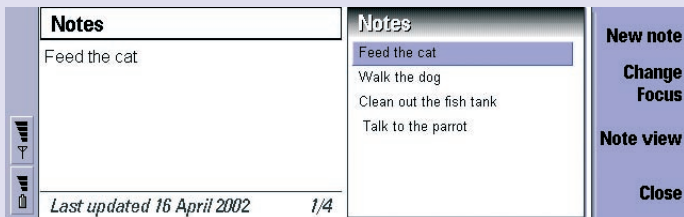
A There are several points of confusion here. After downloading TomeRaider files (with a '.tr' extension) from the Internet, there's no 'installation' needed. Just copy the files over to your Psion using drag and drop with the right mouse button and you'll find you can open them perfectly within TomeRaider.

Also, note that the majority of titles on the MemoWare site are in Palm format, usually with names ending in '.prc'. These ebooks *can* be read on a Psion, but using the shareware Ebook (www.geocities.com/ebookepoc) instead.

Keep your eyes open though, as there are some ebooks in native TomeRaider format, although the application's compressed, record-based file structure makes it far more useful when dealing with large reference databases. See www.tomeraider.com for details and examples.

9210 jotter

Q I've recently switched my Psion Series 5 for a Nokia 9210 Communicator, but I really miss



*Jotter by
any other
name—Notes
running on the
Nokia 9210*

the old Jotter application. Is there no similar program available for the Nokia, or am I now reduced to keeping all those little notes inside a Word file?

Terry Wallis, Dublin, IRELAND

A Although it's easy to miss, there is a Jotter equivalent supplied on the Nokia 9210 CD-ROM. It's particularly easy to miss as it's called 'Notes' rather than Jotter, but it does the same job. There are a number of items that are included on the 9210 CD but don't come pre-installed on the machine, and many users miss these completely. As well as the jotter lookalike, they include a good units conversion program, a few games and a full spell checker and thesaurus, just like the one on your Psion.

Apart from the Nokia CD, you can also download the latest versions of all the free software add-ons from www.forum.nokia.com. Just look under the 'Product Support' section, where you'll find the latest version of every-

thing. When adding these applications, it's imperative that you use the versions that are compatible with the version of the operating system that's running on your Communicator. Just follow the instructions on the Nokia site.

Brightening up the 9210

Q I know it's possible to change the desktop backdrop on my Nokia 9210, and even to change the pattern that appears in the command area at the right of the screen, but is there no way to customize the colours of everything else?

Petri Litmanen, Espoo, FINLAND

A If you really feel the urge to perk up your 9210, then try **Colors** (\$15, from www.epocware.com). This allows you to customize the colours of virtually every aspect of the interface, right down to scrollbars, text highlights and user messages.

*Colors—
complete
flexibility to
customise the
colour scheme
of your 9210*



Musings

After 10 years as a Psion reseller, Clove Technology's founder, Chris Love, reflects on a decade in the business . . .



I was already a big palmtop computer user when I created Clove Technology back in 1992. Strangely, it has taken some of our suppliers years to work out the connection between 'C Love' and 'C-L-O-V-E'—we still often get called *Glove* Technology, and for some unknown reason I sometimes get called *Clive*.

Things were certainly a little different in 1992, running the company from one small study at home, with our first advert being a three-liner in the classified section of a local newspaper. Our very first sale was a printer cable for the Series 3, which I delivered myself and set up and tested with the client's printer over a cup of tea. Nearly 90,000 orders later, our range has now been extended to cover Palm, Psion, Pocket PC and Oregon Scientific Products. As part of the expansion we moved to new premises about a year ago, still in Bournemouth on the South coast of England, but now with eight staff, some of whom work part time.

New sophistication

There's been a big increase in the complexity of handheld computer products over the past 10 years. In our first year the most technically demanding questions would simply be about setting up a basic connection to a PC, whereas now questions often relate to remote access to PCs via a wireless LAN, complex email setups, data synchronization, and so on.

Cool customers

We have dealt with a huge variety of customers over the years, including the Archbishop of Canterbury, various MPs and Lords, sports personalities and the like. Our youngest client so far was under *five* years old and our oldest nearly 100, showing just how wide the appeal of palmtop computers can be. We have one 82 year old lady who purchased a 5mx and a modem to keep in contact with her family while she was back-packing around France. I'm constantly astonished by the wide variety of uses people find for Psion

products, and machines we've sold over the years have been involved with such diverse projects as world expeditions, the design of the national lottery and checking vote counts on Election Day.

A sticky end

We naturally get a lot of calls from customers who've accidentally damaged or destroyed their palmtops, needing either repair or replacement. I've seen machines that have been eaten by dogs (and children), one that fell over a cliff (*without* its owner, thankfully) and still worked—plus at least one that had fallen into a toilet and most certainly *didn't* work!

Novice customers are almost always elated when a simple soft reset gets them access to their vital data that they have not backed up, while others have been in the depths of despondency when the data cannot be recovered and hasn't been backed up. It's a subject that gets endless coverage in Palmtop, I know, but it's amazing how many people own a palmtop for *years* without ever making a backup, and then appear totally shocked when all their data is lost.

Sad days

With our business having relied so heavily on Psion products in the early years, it was very sad to see Psion's news of their intention to pull out of the handheld consumer market last year, not least because there is still no product that can offer all the facilities of the Psion 5mx. I still quietly hope that some other manufacturer will step into the breach and eventually offer a keyboarded colour palmtop running the new Symbian software. From endless discussions with

customers I'm still convinced that such a product would find a lucrative market awaiting it, not least from so many existing Psion users who are not keen to move to the Pocket PC or Palm OS platform. As a big Psion fan, needless to say I'm determined to support Psion users and supply Psion products for as long as possible.

Bargain time

One of the few positive things to happen for Psion users in recent times has been the enormous drop in the price of CompactFlash memory storage. I remember that when the Series 5 was first launched, Psion's 10MB CF card (the largest available at the time) was priced at £250, and the first 32MB card on the market was nearly £500—more than the price of the Psion Series 5 itself. You can now buy a 32MB card for under £25!

The future . . .

I remember that Palmtop magazine's founder, Steve Clack, was a customer of ours long before he set up the magazine, and we spent a lot of time discussing the possibility of such a project—nowadays we often debate where we think the market will end up. It's interesting to see how palmtop computers and telecommunications are now converging, but we both feel that many people still need a keyboard-based palmtop—one that allows for data input at realistic typing speeds. Something uncannily like the Psion Series 5mx.

For the future, we will continue to specialise in palmtops, and hopefully serve customers for years to come. And who knows—my eldest son is called Greg, so maybe we *will* eventually become *Glove* Technology.